G. R. Barrell

THROUGH THE CHURCH GATE

Book I

THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND

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The plates of Canterbury Cathedral, the laying-on of hands at Ordination, the celebration of Holy Communion, and the bishop's throne at Norwich are by Henry C. Stacy, F.R.P.S. Those of Lincoln Cathedral and Louth

Parish Church are by A. F. Kersting, F.R.P.S., and the photographs of St Clement by Norman Dash, A.R.P.S. The font of St Gregory's Church, Sudbury, was photographed by Richard Burn, and the illustration of Langton's meeting with the barons by H. I. Jarman.

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I am most grateful to all those who have helped in any way in the production of this book which will, I hope, be of some service to Church schools. Not least among them is Mr G. C. Darton whose careful reading and helpful comments have enabled me to remove many imperfections from the text.

G.R.B.

Introduction

THIS is one of a series of four books about the Church of England. Its aim is to give the reader an outline of the faith, life, worship and organisation of the Church—to lead him, as it were, inside the gate. Although the four books are intended to be read in order, each is complete in itself, and covers one aspect of the Established Church.

The first book deals with the things which are most easily seen and which, therefore, are the first things about which questions may be asked. In a very brief outline it covers the history of the Church, its organisation and outward forms. In the second book the reader is taken, step by step, through the Christian year and its orderly round of worship. The third book is concerned with the Prayer Book as a guide to human life, helping the traveller to find his way at each crossroads he reaches on his journey from the cradle to the grave. Finally, in the fourth book, we come to consider some important aspects of the work of the Church in the present time, and also the privileges and responsibilities of Church membership.

One word of explanation is needed. At a number of points in this series comparisons have been made between the practice of the Church of England and the other religious bodies which are to be found in this country. This has been done because there is often ignorance both of the similarities and of the differences which exist. The fact that the amount of space devoted to the other

Churches is very small in comparison with the books as a whole is not due to any desire to minimise the work which they have done, and continue to do. These books, however, are primarily intended for Church folk who wish to know more about their own Church and its working, and for this reason it has been necessary to keep the Church of England firmly in the centre of the picture.

I

The Church

IF you ask somebody what a church is, you will probably get an answer rather like this: 'A church is a building where people go to worship God.' That would be quite right, and you will find that a good deal of this book is about such buildings, but that is not the only—or even the most important—meaning of the word.

Sometimes I say that I am going to speak to my school, but that does not mean that I am going to stand out in the playground and talk to the school building, although I often use the word 'school' in that sense. Just as 'school' is used both for the building and for the people who work in it, so the word 'church' is used for the building and for the people who worship there.

In this book you will find that when the word 'church' is spelt with a small 'c' it means the building, when it is spelt with a capital 'C' it means the people who try to follow and worship our Lord.

I once had a pupil whose name was Stavroulla Kyriakou. She had been born in the island of Cyprus, but, if she had wanted to change her Greek surname into English, she might have been called Stavroulla Church. The Greek word 'kyriakou', the Scotch word 'kirk', and the English word 'church', all mean 'belonging to the Lord'. Thus, the Church is the family of people who belong to him.

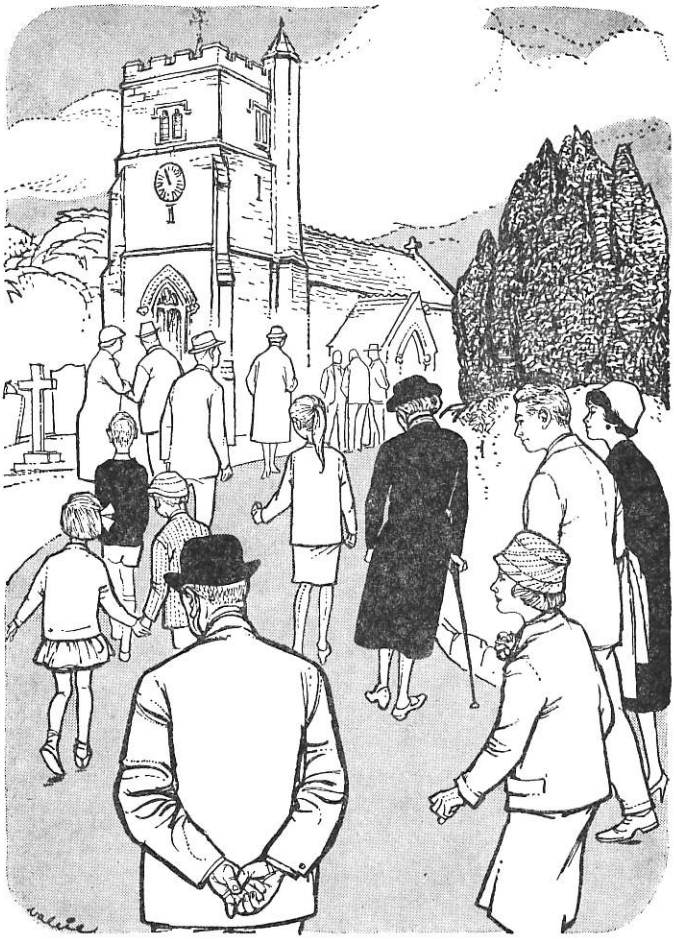


Fig. 1 The Church goes to church. Everyone in this picture is a member of the family of the Church, the whole body of Christians. In a few minutes they will be worshipping in the church, the family's home.

The story of the Church goes back for almost two thousand years, to the days just after the ascension of our Lord. Before he left his disciples he told them to stay in Jerusalem until they received a new power to do his work through the coming of the Holy Spirit. In the book of the Acts of the Apostles we get glimpses of the life of the early Church in the days before there were special buildings where Christians could meet for worship, and when services were held either in private houses or in the open air.

The Church began in Jerusalem, but it has since spread to every part of the world, often under great difficulties. We shall read more in the next chapter about the story of the Church in England, but before doing so we must learn some important things about the catholic, or world-wide, Church.

Some people think that the word 'catholic' means 'Roman Catholic', but this is not so. The real meaning of the word is 'universal', or 'world-wide', and it can only be used by itself of the whole Church throughout the world. Roman Catholics are members of that part of the catholic Church which recognises the Bishop of Rome, or Pope, as the head of the Church. In England it is the Church of England which is the catholic Church of the land.

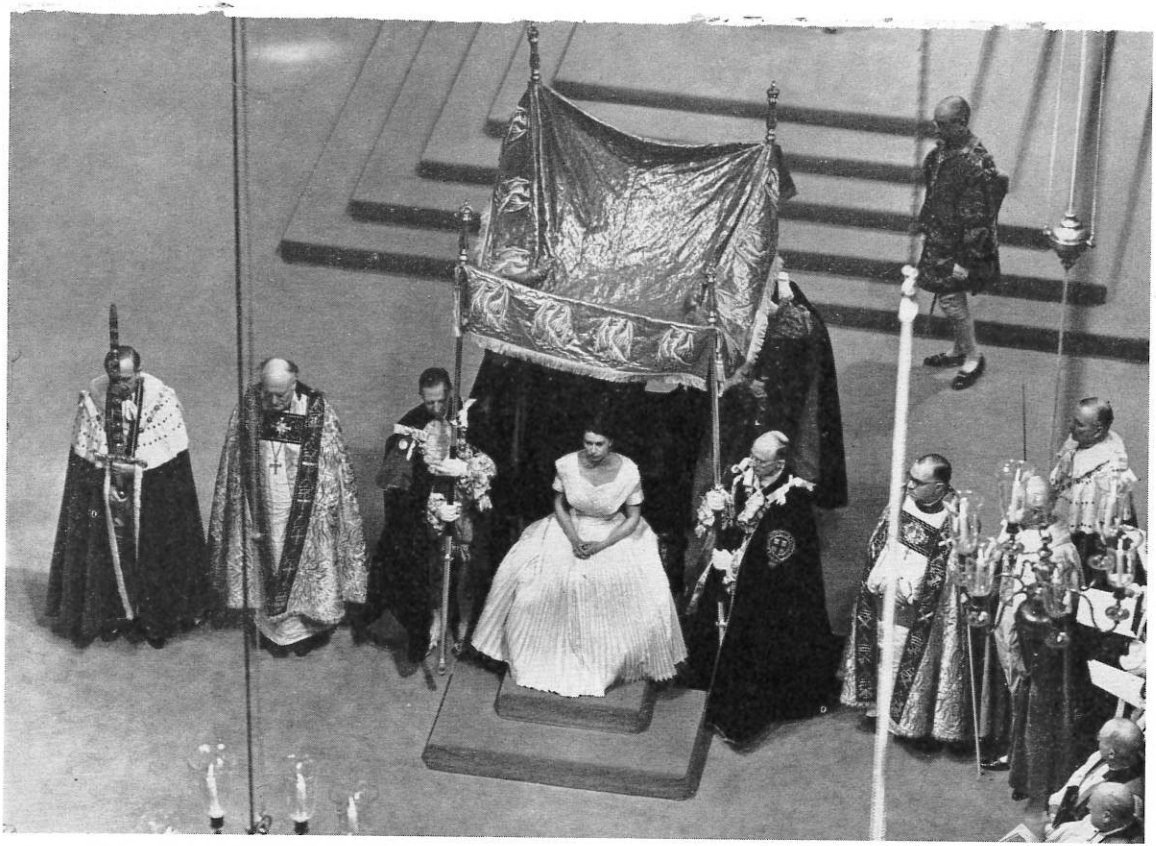
If you walk round the streets of an English town you will find many kinds of churches. There will certainly be at least one building belonging to the Church of England, and you may also find a Roman Catholic church, a Congregational church, a Methodist church, and possibly several others. In some other countries you would find an even greater variety and, if you visited these various churches, you would find that the buildings are

very different inside, and that the services vary as well.

On the next page is a diagram showing some of the main divisions of the Church which exist at the present time. The first great split, between the western and the eastern Churches, took place twelve years before William the Conqueror landed in England, at a time when the Roman Empire was similarly divided between east and west. Rome was the capital of the western part of the Empire, and Constantinople of the east. In the same way the western and eastern Churches were based on these two cities, under the rule of the Bishop of Rome in the west and the Patriarch of Constantinople in the east.

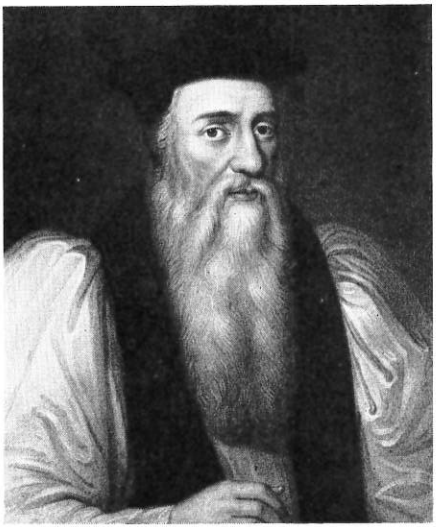
The protestant, or 'reformed', Churches broke away from the Church of Rome at different times, partly in protest against the growing power of the popes, and partly because many people believed that a great deal of the teaching of the western Church was contrary to that of our Lord. Under the influence of Martin Luther (1483–1546) in Germany and John Calvin (1509–64)[1] in Switzerland some reformers made sweeping changes in their teaching, their services, and their forms of Church government. In New Testament times each local Church was more or less cut off from its neighbours, and relied for its contacts with other Churches on visits from the apostles, and on letters such as those written by St Paul. The Lutheran and Calvinist Churches tried to return to this local form of government, and they abandoned the organisation of the Church in dioceses under the control of bishops. They did not fully realise that the early organisation was due chiefly to the difficulty of travel or that the bishop had always been, in his own region, the representative of the whole Church rather than

[1] See Plate 1.



1. Elizabeth II vested for Anointing, in Westminster Abbey on 2 June 1953

2.*a* Henry VIII by Holbein



b Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury

3.*a* Martin Luther

b John Calvin

Fig. 2 The principal divisions of the Christian Church.

just a link between a number of independent Churches.

In the Church of England and the Moravian Church the reforms took a different pattern. These Churches no longer accepted the authority of the pope but they kept, not only the unbroken line of bishops, but also the character of a local, national Church including bishops, priests, deacons, and the whole nation. They are, therefore, both catholic and protestant. The Church of England held firmly to the faith and government of the catholic Church which had been handed down through the ages, abandoning only the newer teachings which had no authority in Scripture, and which had grown up to lend some support to the claims of the popes. For some time changes had been taking place in the form of its services and, in particular, the Latin service books were translated into English, so that everyone could understand what was being said and done. These changes were in accordance with the spirit of the Reformation and were easily absorbed into the life of the Church.

During the seventeenth century the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists formed their own groups in England, and more will be said about them in the next chapter.

Unfortunately, the various groups within the Church have not always managed to live happily side by side. The divisions have always been the result of sharp disagreements about teaching, government, or worship because, when men are genuinely concerned about things which they believe to be right, they often quarrel bitterly. By now you will probably be saying to yourself: 'Surely Christians should be able to get on with each other without all this bitterness. If one part of the Church is right, are all the others wrong? Is this the sort of thing which our

Lord wanted to happen? And how can any part of this divided Church truly call itself catholic, if that word means universal?'

Sometimes you may have seen a little girl and her brother having a furious quarrel. Their eyes blaze, they are shouting loudly and, perhaps, hitting or clawing at each other. They look as though their hatred will last as long as they live, but what happens if someone from outside the family tries to interfere, or to make peace? All their anger is turned against the intruder:

'You leave my sister alone!'

'Don't you talk to my brother like that!'

The catholic Church, in the proper sense of the word, is the whole family of those who love and wish to serve our Lord, and it often behaves in the same way that human families do. Its members may sometimes disagree with each other but, like the little boy and girl who are quarrelling, there is a family loyalty which goes a great deal deeper than arguments. Christians belong to a family and, even though they may fall out from time to time, there is something which binds them together. They have one father—God—who loves them, and whom they love. They have all come to know more about that father, what he wants them to do, and how he wants them to behave, through the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. Like all good families, they are bound together by the love of their father.

Did you know that the word 'religion' means 'something which binds together'? When you think about the Church's divisions, try also to remember that all Christians are bound together by the love of God which was revealed to mankind by our Lord, and which is always at work in the world through the Holy Spirit.

Fig. 3 (*a*) *Hall-marks which might be found on a modern article of sterling silver:*

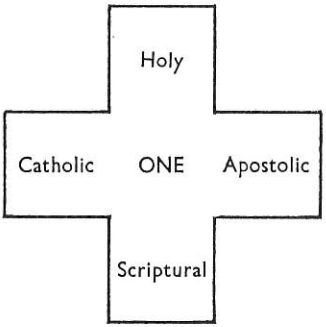
(*i*) Maker's mark—*consisting of initials;*

(*ii*) Town Mark—*in this case the leopard's head, which is the London mark;*

(*iii*) Sterling standard mark—*the lion which guarantees that the article contains at least 92.5 per cent of fine silver;*

(*iv*) Date letter—*indicating the year of marking, in this case 1952–53. The date letter is altered annually; in London the change takes place in May.*

N.B. The signs may not always appear in this order.



(*b*) *the 'hall-mark' of the Church: the Cross, which is the symbol of the Christian faith, and the marks by which the Church may be recognised.*

If you want to know whether a piece of plate is really made of silver you look for the hall-marks. These are small symbols which guarantee the standard of the metal, and are so called because from 1300 onwards articles have been tested and marked at the Goldsmiths' Hall in the City of London. Other assay offices were opened later, because it was not always convenient to send wares to London. Some of the later offices have been closed, but

hall-marking is still carried out in London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Chester, Sheffield, and Birmingham.

Fig. 3 is an illustration of hall-marks such as you might find on a modern article made of sterling silver in the United Kingdom. Beside it is a picture of a cross bearing five words which we can think of as the 'hall-mark' by which it is possible to recognise a true part of the catholic Church. Look carefully at the picture and remember that—

THE CHURCH IS

ONE: It is ONE company of people who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Master, even though they may serve and worship him in different ways. St Paul reminds us that our bodies have many parts—feet, hands, eyes, ears, and so on—but we have only ONE body each. So the Church is the body of Christ. After the ascension, our Lord no longer went about in human form teaching people and doing good, but his spirit works through those who seek to follow him, and they must try to carry on his work. Since his followers are members of Christ, the Church has now become the body of Christ and, although it may have many members, it is ONE body: 'There is ONE body and ONE Spirit, even as ye are called in ONE hope of your calling; ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism, ONE God and Father of all.'[1]

HOLY: The early Christians always referred to each other as saints, and the word means 'holy people' or 'separated people'. Christians are separated from other people to do the will of God, just as the church building is separated for the worship of God, and for nothing else. Are *you* a

[1] Eph. 4.4–6.

Fig. 4 'A Scout is active in doing good, not passive in being good.' A drawing by Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scout Movement.

Christian? Yes, you may admit to that, but—would you call yourself a saint? Being a saint does not just mean being in a stained-glass window—it really means living in the ordinary world, and trying to do the will of God. Look at the picture (Fig. 4) drawn by Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scout Movement, and remember that a saint, like a Scout, is active in doing good, and not passive in being good.

CATHOLIC: The Church is universal—spread across the whole world—and the word 'catholic' cannot be claimed for the exclusive use of any one part of it. When the power of the popes was overthrown in this country the Church of England continued its long history without interruption; it did not just cut itself adrift and start again

from nothing. The Church of England did not begin in the reign of King Henry VIII—its history began with the landing of the first missionaries, and its roots go back without a break to the Church of New Testament times. Remember that, whilst the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church are both catholic Churches, neither of them is by itself *the* catholic Church.

APOSTOLIC: The Church is 'built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone'.[1] The word 'apostle' means 'a man who is sent out'. When our Lord had taught his disciples he sent them out to pass on his teaching to others and they were known as apostles from this time onwards. As they travelled from place to place they formed new branches of the Church in the towns where they had converted men and women to Christianity. The apostles could not be everywhere at once, and other Christians were appointed to supervise the Churches in their absence. Bishops, priests, and deacons are all mentioned by early Christian writers, including those of the New Testament, but the duties of the three orders were not the same then as they are today. So far as is known the threefold ministry has continued without a break until the present time. Men are called to the work of a bishop, priest, or deacon by God himself, but it seems that they have always been admitted to these orders by the public prayer of the Church together with the laying-on of hands by a bishop. Thus the apostles passed on our Lord's authority to the earliest bishops who were to continue their work. These bishops ordained others, and so on to the present day.

[1] Ehp. 2.20.

SCRIPTURAL: Article VI of the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion to be found at the end of the Prayer Book says: 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation.' The Church of England has always insisted that it is a scriptural Church because everything which it teaches is to be found within the covers of the Bible. As time has gone by the teaching of the Church on some subjects has been explained and made fuller, the creeds have been written as statements of what the Church believes, and the forms of worship have been modified. In spite of this, nothing has been done by the Church which is contrary to the teaching of our Lord in the New Testament. Indeed, you will remember that one of the reasons for the break from Rome was that many people in England believed that some of the teaching which had been put out by the popes as the official teaching of the Church was not founded on what we can read in the Bible. In the catholic Church, says Article VI, nothing should be taught unless the authority for that teaching can be found in the Bible.

2

The Church in England

IF you look at a halfpenny, you will see engraved around the Queen's head the Latin words: ELIZABETH II : DEI GRATIA : REGINA : F : D. This means: 'Elizabeth II, by God's pleasure Queen, Defender of the Faith.' The title of Defender of the Faith was first given to King Henry VIII more than four hundred years ago, and it has been borne by the sovereigns of England ever since.

Why has the Queen this title? You might expect it to be held by, perhaps, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who has made a special study of the Christian faith, and you may be even more surprised when you learn that the Queen is also the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Moreover, at her coronation in Westminster Abbey she promised before God to 'maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline and government thereof, as by law established in England', and also to 'preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, and to the Churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges, as by law do or shall appertain to them'.[1]

By now it must be clear that there is a very close connection between the Church and the Queen, for she is not

[1] See Plate 1.

only the head of the State but also the head of the Church. In order to understand this link we must look for a while at the history of the Church in England. We may then be able to see why Anglicans (as members of the Church of England are called) look upon their Church as both the national Church of the country and as the catholic Church of the land.

It is not very certain when the Christian faith first reached Britain. One old tradition says that Joseph of Arimathea, who allowed his grave to be used for our Lord's burial, was the first to bring Christianity to our country and that he settled at Glastonbury. It is much more likely, however, that the Church first came to these islands a century or so later through Roman soldiers who had become Christians.

By the year 314 the Church in Britain was sufficiently well organised for its bishops to be present at the Synod of Arles in France. After the coming of the Anglo-Saxons rather more than a century later, the British Christians were driven to the north and west of the Islands. Celtic missionaries from Ireland set about converting the new occupiers of England, but this was a long, difficult, and often discouraging task.

A further move to introduce Christianity to England came in the year 596 when Pope Gregory the Great sent his friend Augustine and a band of monks to plant the faith in the kingdom of Kent (Fig. 5). The missionaries landed at Ebbsfleet near the mouth of the River Thames just after Easter in the following year. Within a short while the King and a number of his subjects had been received into the Church, and Augustine was consecrated as the first Archbishop of the English in November 597. The King gave him a ruined villa, and he rebuilt and

Fig. 5 St Augustine and his monks arrive at the court of King Ethelbert to begin the conversion of England in A.D. *597.*

enlarged this as his cathedral. This spot in Canterbury where Augustine first set up his 'bishop's stool' fourteen hundred years ago, is still the chief shrine of the Church of England,[1] and the Archbishop of Canterbury is still the spiritual leader of the Anglican Communion. As such he presides over meetings of the Lambeth Conference,[2] but in other matters the recognition of his leadership is largely due to the fact that Canterbury is the oldest Anglican diocese, as he has no direct authority over the daughter Churches.

There were differences in the customs observed by the two groups of missionaries in the north and south of England. For example, Easter was observed on different dates by the two parties. When Oswy, the King of Northumbria, married a southern princess he discovered that he would be celebrating the great feast of Easter whilst his wife was still observing the Lenten fast. In 664 a synod, or conference, was called at Whitby in Yorkshire and the saintly Abbess Hilda presided over a meeting of representatives of both the Roman and the Celtic clergy (Fig. 6). As a result it was decided to use the Roman method of calculating the date of Easter throughout the country. From this time the influence of the Irish missionaries dwindled, and the Church in England became firmly bound up with the main stream of Christian thought which sprang from the western division of the Church.

The Church spread gradually through the British Isles. New bishoprics were created, and the country was eventually divided into two provinces under the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Monasteries were founded, and some of these had become famous long before the

[1] See Plate 4a. [2] See page 77.

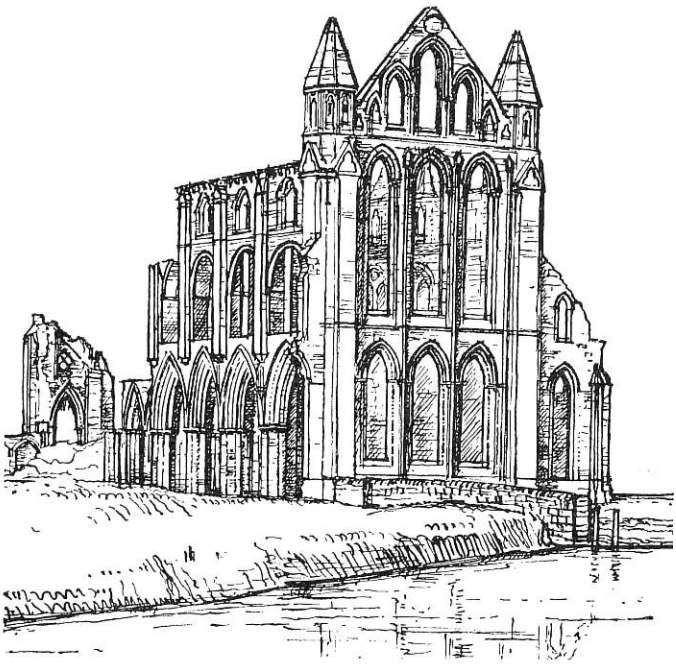


Fig. 6 The ruins of St Hilda's abbey, high on the cliffs above the Yorkshire fishing port of Whitby.

time of William the Conqueror. In those days they were the principal schools of the country; they served as hospitals, and as hotels where travellers might stay, and they provided the clergy for many of the parishes near them. Many were founded by wealthy churchmen and they frequently received large presents of money, goods, and land, so that they became very powerful.

As time went by every parish had its own church. It

was usually quite a simple building, but a number of the early churches have survived until the present time. Some were built of wood, like the log church still standing at Greenstead, near Ongar in Essex; others were of stone, like St Cedd's tiny cathedral at Bradwell on the coast of the same county. Quite a number of Saxon towers remain, as at Earls Barton in Northamptonshire.

At this period the Church of England was still part of the western Church, and the Pope claimed the right to rule it. In time this led to difficulties, and sometimes to open quarrels, particularly about the right of the Pope to tax the English Church and to appoint its bishops. The Church had its own courts which were presided over by the Pope's representatives, and Archbishops of Canterbury often found themselves torn between their loyalty to the Pope and their loyalty to the King. The bishops and abbots sat in the King's Council, which was the forerunner of Parliament, and they were also great landowners. In return for their lands they had promised loyalty to the King; in return for their bishopric or abbey they had promised loyalty to the Pope. When the King and the Pope quarrelled, which were they to support?

Sometimes the bishops would set out to prevent the King from becoming an absolute dictator. One Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas à Becket, was murdered in his own cathedral in 1170 for trying to uphold the rights of the Church against King Henry II. Forty-five years later Stephen Langton, one of Becket's successors, set out to curb the power of King John by drawing up Magna Carta.[1] Many of the bishops at that time were statesmen as well as churchmen, and yet another Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon of Sudbury, was beheaded during the

[1] See Plate 46.

Peasants' Revolt of 1381 because of the unpopularity of a new tax which he had imposed during the previous year.[1]

Although it was subject to Rome, the Church of England during this period was a national Church. The whole country had been divided into parishes, each with its own church and clergy. It was the great age of church building, and many of our finest churches were built between 1066 and the end of the Wars of the Roes in 1485. The monasteries still flourished and, although they had grown very prosperous and did not always pay sufficient heed to the rules of their founders, they still did a great deal of good in days when there were few other schools, no almshouses for the poor, and no hospitals for the sick.

But times were changing. In 1509 Henry VIII became King of England.[2] His elder brother had died, and Henry obtained special permission from the Pope to marry his young widow, Katharine of Aragon. Throughout the country there was a rising tide of feeling against the power of the Pope over the English Church, and especially against the payment of taxes to Rome. Henry was a keen churchman, and Pope Leo X gave him the title of Defender of the Faith as a reward for a book which he had written to uphold the catholic faith. It was Henry, however, who eventually started the Church of England on its separate course, and first freed it from the domination of Rome.

Henry desperately wanted a son to succeed him as king. As the years went by it became clear that this ambition was unlikely to be fulfilled so long as he was married to Katharine. By the law of the Church a man could not marry his brother's widow and, as we have

[1] His mummified head may still be seen in the vestry of the church of St Gregory, which he rebuilt in his home town of Sudbury in Suffolk.
[2] See Plate 2a.

already seen, Henry had found it necessary to get special permission for this. He now tried to get a new Pope (Clement VII) to say that this permission should not have been given and that, in fact, he was not married at all.

The Pope did not want to upset Henry, but he was even more unwilling to set aside the permission which had already been given. At that time the Pope was practically a prisoner of Katharine's uncle, the Emperor Charles V, who was unlikely to watch his niece's marriage being broken up by the Pope without taking some action against him.

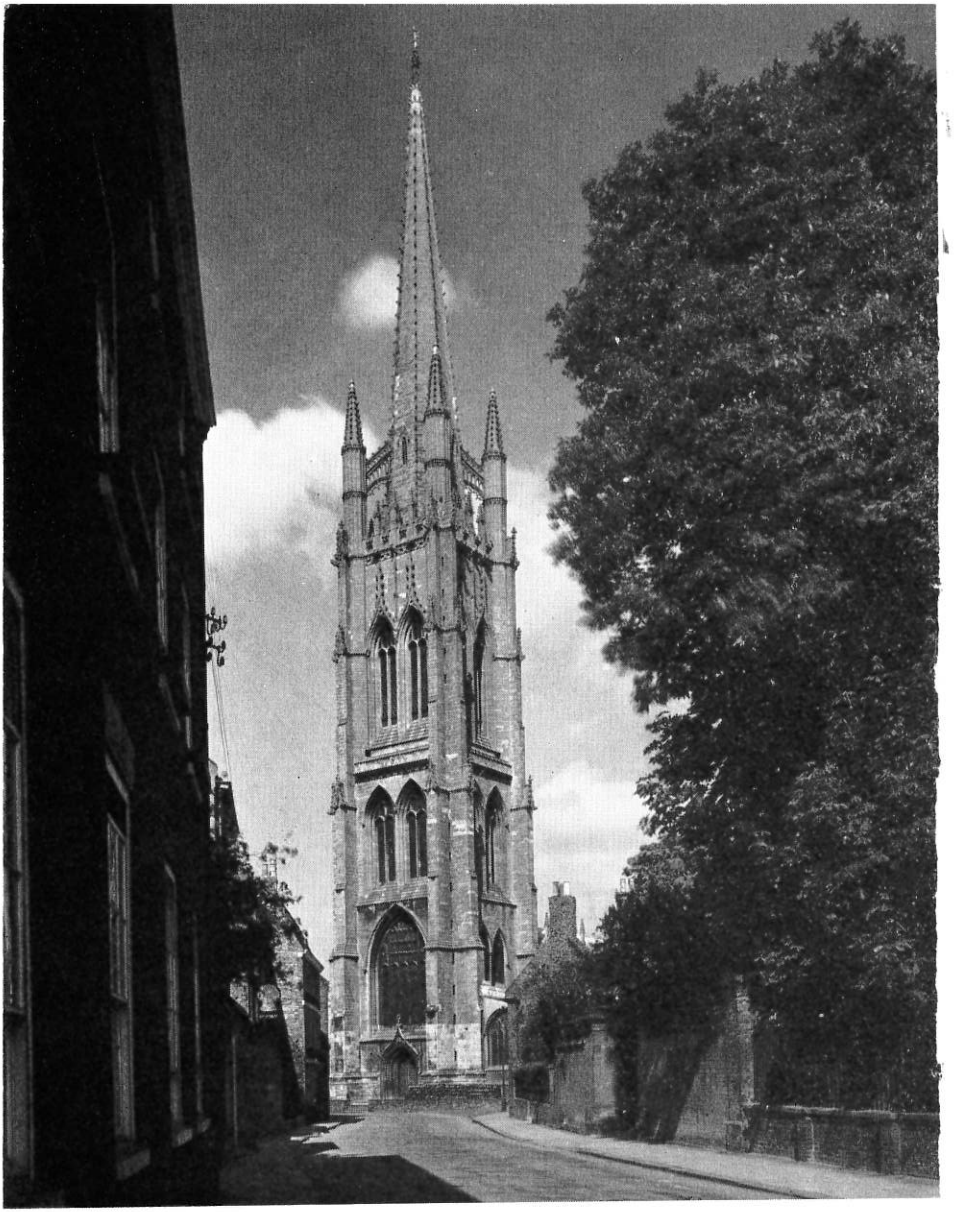
For four years the King and the Pope argued about the marriage. At last, Henry realised that he would make no progress so long as he considered the Pope's feelings in the matter. He therefore appointed as Archbishop of Canterbury a man who was known to believe that the King's marriage to Katharine was illegal.[1] Thomas Cranmer became Archbishop on March 30th, 1533, and on May 23rd in the same year Henry's marriage was set aside. Less than ten days later Anne Boleyn was crowned as Queen of England.

Having gone so far, Henry found himself forced to cut the remaining ties between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. An Act of Parliament made him the Supreme Head of the Church of England, with the right to name all future bishops. Henry died in 1547, nine years after ordering that an English translation of the Bible should be placed in all churches. During the latter years of his reign a great deal of work was done towards the preparation of an English Prayer Book to replace the old Latin service books. The first Book of Common Prayer, based on this work, was issued in 1549. For

[1] See Plate IVc.

4.*a* Canterbury Cathedral

b Stephen Langton and the barons at Bury St Edmunds



5. The parish church of Louth, Lincs

many people the changes made in this book were not drastic enough, and many alterations—most of them based on the teaching of John Calvin—were introduced in a revised Prayer Book which appeared in 1552.

Then followed a short period when the Church of England became linked to Rome again. Henry's son, Edward VI, died at the age of sixteen, and was succeeded by his stepsister Mary, the daughter of the displaced Katharine of Aragon. Mary and her mother had never accepted the religious changes which had followed from Henry's desire for a son, and during Mary's reign the Latin services were restored. Many of those who had genuinely supported the changes made by Henry and Edward were burned at the stake. Among those who suffered in this way was Cranmer.

Mary reigned for only a few years, and was succeeded by Anne Boleyn's daughter, Elizabeth I. Once again the powers of the Bishop of Rome were rejected in this country—this time finally—and Elizabeth was made Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

Through all these changes the Church of England has remained a part of the catholic Church. It has kept its organisation in dioceses presided over by bishops and, apart from refusing to acknowledge the power of the popes, there has been no alteration in its essential teaching. It is still a national Church, based on the parochial system by which everyone in England lives in a parish, and has a rector or vicar to whom he can go for spiritual help.

About a hundred years after the death of Henry VIII the Church of England faced its next great crisis. The country had been torn by civil war, and the King—Charles I—had been executed. For eleven years England became a republic, and during this period the Church of

England was practically abolished. The bishops were turned out from their cathedrals, the Book of Common Prayer could not be used, and the forms of Church government recommended by John Calvin—of whom we read in the last chapter—were introduced.

This was the period which saw the rise of the Presbyterians, the Baptists, and the Congregationalists, and the struggle between the supporters of a national Church and those who wanted a puritan Church. The puritans believed that it is wrong to say that a nation and its Church consist of the same people, because this means that every rogue and scoundrel can claim to be a member of the Church. They thought a 'purer' Church, made up of those who had definitely committed themselves to follow our Lord, to be nearer to the New Testament ideal of the Christian society. Its members could then be expelled if they did not behave as Christians should. Against this, the supporters of a national Church argued that no man is so wicked as to be completely worthless in the sight of God and that, if the Church is really trying to follow our Lord, Christians should try to help those who have fallen into evil ways. To expel them from Christian society is not likely to help them very much.

In 1660 Charles II was restored to his father's throne, and two years later the Book of Common Prayer was reissued in the form we still use. For many years the puritans were severely limited in their religious freedom, but the restrictions were gradually removed, and the puritan Churches still exist today. Thus we now have in England both the national Church of England and the puritan, or 'gathered', Churches. The Church of England has always maintained that it is necessary to keep the ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons, which has

been handed down from early times. The bishop has always been the symbol of the unity of the whole Church, of which the local Church forms a part. The gathered Churches, on the other hand, are really independent, local groups who take for their authority the text: 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I, in the midst of them.'[1] This saying of our Lord, they claim, means that the Church is present wherever there is a handful of believers, without the need for a central organisation or for a ministry dating back to apostolic times, though these may be helpful.

There are two other groups of Christians in this country who should be mentioned at this point. The story of the Methodist Church is rather different from that of the other nonconformists, which is the name given to all who do not conform to the customs of the Church of England. John Wesley was a priest of the Church of England who was very worried because of the slackness which he found everywhere in the Church during the eighteenth century. Whilst he was a student at Oxford University he belonged to a small group of men who became known as methodists, because they tried to be more methodical about their religion. Unfortunately Wesley's enthusiasm did not suit the Church of his day, and he often found that he was not allowed to preach in parish churches. He therefore began travelling round the country from place to place and holding services in the open air. Huge crowds gathered to hear him preach, and took part in singing some of the six thousand hymns composed by his brother Charles.

Wesley did not want to break away from the Church in which he had been brought up; indeed at the very end of

[1] Matt. 18.20.

his life he said: 'I die a member of the Church of England.' Many of his followers, however, did not feel so strongly about this as he did, and within a few years of his death the Methodists had separated from the Church. They, in turn, broke up into a number of small groups, but these were brought together again in 1932 under the name of *The Methodist Church.*

From the time of Elizabeth I Roman Catholics had not been allowed to have churches in England. In 1850 this ban was lifted and the Roman Catholic Church allowed to worship publicly in England. Once again the country was divided into Roman Catholic dioceses, but the bishops were not allowed at that time to use the same titles as those of any of the Anglican bishops. The centre of Roman Catholic worship in England is Westminster Cathedral.

The Acts of Uniformity, by which Parliament has authorised the different editions of the Book of Common Prayer, have always recognised the Church of England as the official Church of the land. The ruling King or Queen must be a communicant member of the Church of England, and must promise to defend its faith and its customs. Meetings of Parliament are opened with prayers which are read by a Church of England priest. The Church of England is established by law, and no other Church in this country can claim that privilege. The bishops are appointed by the Queen on the nomination of the Prime Minister, and the Measures (or Acts) of the Church Assembly are forwarded to Parliament for consideration. If they are confirmed by Parliament the Measures are then ratified by the Queen and have the same force as Acts of Parliament.

This system has certain disadvantages; for example the

Church may not change its forms of worship without the consent of Parliament, a body which includes nonconformists as well as some who are not Christians at all. On the other hand, so long as the Church is established by law, England remains officially a Christian country. Some of the bishops sit in the House of Lords, and take part in affairs of state, just as the bishops and abbots did in the King's Council in olden times. The coronation of the sovereign takes place within the framework of a celebration of the Holy Communion, according to the rites of the Church of England.

If the Church were to be disestablished, it would become merely one of a number of different forms of Christianity, and there would no longer be an official Christian viewpoint in this country. With all its faults and difficulties establishment by law is an important factor in the strength of both Church and State.

Another source of the strength of the Church of England lies in the fact that it is what is sometimes called a 'bridge' Church. We have seen that in the reign of King Henry VIII it overthrew the power of the popes to control its affairs as a protest against many things which were wrong in the western Church. In this sense it is reformed, but, unlike the other reformed Churches, it has retained its apostolic ministry and the traditions which had been handed down from earliest times. In this sense it is also catholic.

Our Lord once told a parable about a wise and wealthy man, who took both old and new treasures from his strong-room.[1] The Church of England tried to do just this, and believes that by protesting against the corruption of later times it has become even more truly catholic. The

[1] Matt. 13.52.

Church of England did not begin in the reign of Henry VIII, for its history is as old as that of any part of the Church. It does, however, bridge the gap between two extreme forms of Church order, and has kept what is best in each.

3

The Parish Church

In every town and village in this country you will find a parish church. It is often one of the largest buildings in the district, frequently it stands on a prominent site and, in any case, the style of the building will leave you in no doubt as to what it is.

Many parish churches are very old. The great period of church building was between the years 1066 and 1485. By the end of that time most parishes had a church sufficiently dignified for the worship of God, and few new churches were built during the next three hundred years. An exception is the City of London where eighty-six churches were burnt down in the Great Fire of 1666, and many of them had to be replaced.

Between 1800 and 1900 there was a great increase in the population of the country and many comparatively small places became large towns. New churches had to be built to serve these growing parishes, and most of them were put up in the style of churches which already existed. Since 1945 there has been a further period of church building, partly to replace churches which were bombed during the war, and partly to serve new housing estates. Many of these post-war churches are in a modern style of architecture.

At one time the parish church was used not only for

worship but also as a public hall. The nave of the church was the largest room in the town, and all kinds of meetings were held there. For this reason the church was often placed as centrally as possible, and in such a position that it dominated other buildings.

The churchyard (Fig. 7) is often approached through

Fig. 7 'God's Acre' An English churchyard with its lychgate and yew trees.

a *lych-gate*, which is a gateway with a roof over it. 'Lych' is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning 'corpse', and the first part of the funeral service sometimes took place here. In some parts of the country, particularly in Cornwall, it is still possible to see the low platform on which the body was laid under the shelter of the roof. The *churchyard* itself may be planted with yew trees. The yew is an evergreen and does not lose its leaves during the winter, so it was once regarded as a symbol of everlasting life and a suitable tree for growing in the churchyard. There were also more practical reasons for the popularity of the yew in England. After church on Sundays all able-bodied men were required to practise archery, and the targets were often set up in the churchyard. What could be more fitting than to plant the churchyard with the tree from which the long-bows were made? Furthermore, the yew is poisonous to animals, and the presence of yew trees helped to keep cattle from browsing among the graves in the churchyard.

The appearance of the church from outside depends very much on the part of the country in which it stands. Before the coming of the railways it was too difficult and too expensive to carry stone very far except for the most important churches. When Norwich Cathedral was built about the year 1100 the stone was brought from Caen in Normandy, but most parish churches had to make do with local material.

In the Cotswolds the towns and villages are dominated by churches built of grey limestone, and in Devonshire the local red sandstone was often used. East Anglia, which has many of our greatest churches, has no local building stone at all. Most of the churches in this part of England are built of flints, sometimes mixed with local

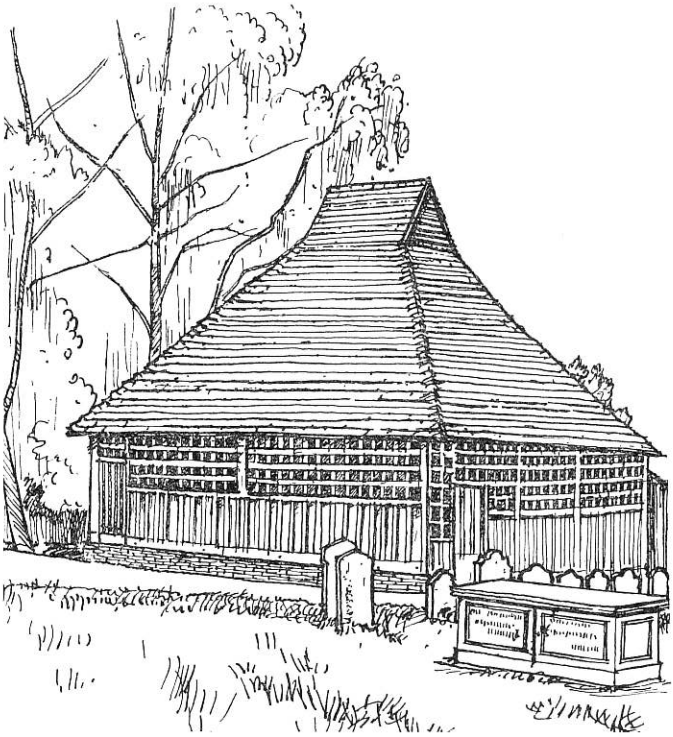


Fig. 8 The curious bell-cage at East Bergholt in Suffolk. The bells are swung by hand instead of being attached to ropes.

'pudding stone', or even tiles from a ruined Roman villa which had stood near the site a thousand years before the church was built. Strips of harder stone were usually imported for the corners of the building, but where the local people could not afford to do even this they tried to do without corners altogether. This accounts for a

number of churches in this part of the country, such as Blundeston in Suffolk, and Pentlow in Essex, which have round towers.

The *tower* of a church, often crowned with a *spire*, served several purposes. At one time there were no made-up roads, and church towers served as landmarks for travellers. Some, near the coast, were also used as sea-marks by sailors near the shore. Towers are also a home for the bells, which are thus placed at a height from which they may be heard for as far as possible. But the most important reason for building a tower was to emphasise the importance of the church as God's house: it had to be the finest and most important building in the district. Curious stories are told about some church towers. At East Bergholt in Suffolk there is a legend that the devil came each night whilst the tower was being built, and pulled it down again to the level of the church roof. At last the builders gave up, and it was decided to place the bells in a cage in the churchyard. The bells still hang in this curious structure, and the stump of the tower may be seen, no higher than the rest of the building (Fig. 8).

As we approach the church, we see the *porch*. This is often a large and elaborate structure, and sometimes has a room above it. At one time many parishes were served by visiting priests from a monastery, and during their stay in a parish they lived in this room. In some towns these rooms were used as the meeting-place of the guilds. The porch sometimes has a bench on each side, and you will notice that these seats will often hold just six people. They were once used for the twelve men of the jury which met with the coroner to hold inquests just outside the church door.

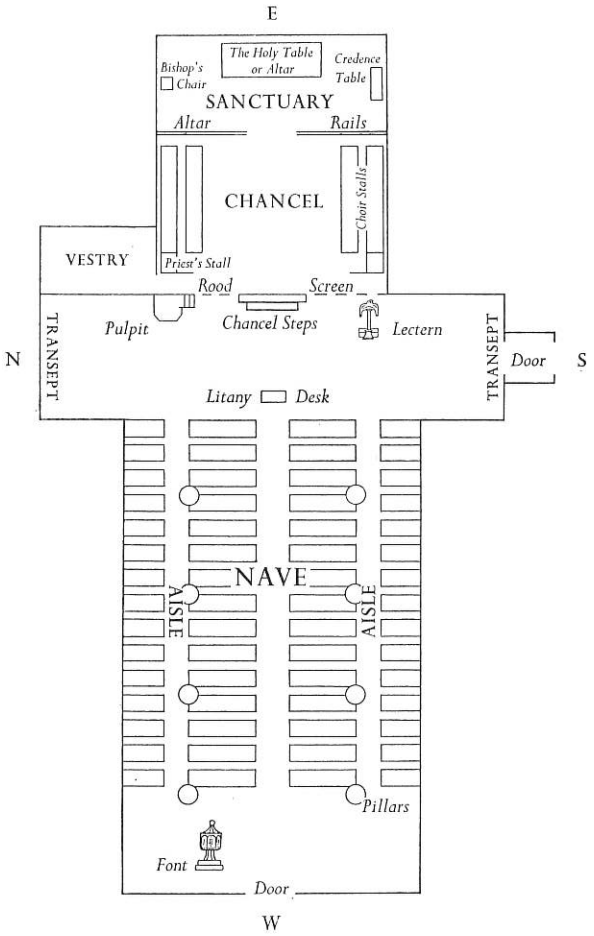


Fig. 9 The plan of a parish church. Not all churches are as complete in plan as this one, and there may be some slight variation in the position of the furnishings. Compare it with your own church.

On the opposite page is the plan of a parish church (Fig. 9). This shows a large town church, but most parish churches have only some of the parts shown here. This particular church is cruciform, or cross-shaped. Why? You will notice, also, that the chancel is not quite in line with the nave. It is said that churches were sometimes planned like this to represent our Lord's head leaning to one side as he hung on the cross. An example may be seen in the church of St Mary at Prittlewell near Southend.[1]

The two chief divisions inside the church are the nave and the chancel. The other parts have been added to give additional space where the church would not otherwise be big enough. The *nave* is the people's part of the church and, since it was often used for meetings, it was not usually consecrated. The word 'nave' comes from a Latin word meaning 'ship', and is used for this part of the church because, from the outside, it looks rather like a boat turned upside down.

Sometimes, the nave is extended sideways through arches into *aisles*, or wings, which can be used for additional seating and for processions. Strictly speaking, it is not correct to use the word 'aisle' for the gangway between the seats. Today, the nave is usually full of pews or chairs, but at one time the congregation stood through the services. Those who were old or sick were allowed to sit on stone benches which ran round the wall. This explains our saying about letting 'the weakest go to the wall'.

The east end of the church was once divided from the nave by a great *screen*, and is called the chancel (from the Latin word for 'screen'). On top of the screen there was

[1] Plates 6 and 7 show the exterior and interior of a town and a village church.

sometimes a platform with a crucifix and the figures of the mother of our Lord and St John. This group of figures was called the *rood*, and the screen itself came to be called the *rood screen*. The *rood loft* was approached by a little stairway cut into one of the pillars of the chancel arch, and the two doorways—one on the floor of the church, and the other some feet up—can still be seen in many churches, even though the screen has been pulled down. During celebrations of the Holy Communion the Gospel was read from the rood loft, the priest going in procession

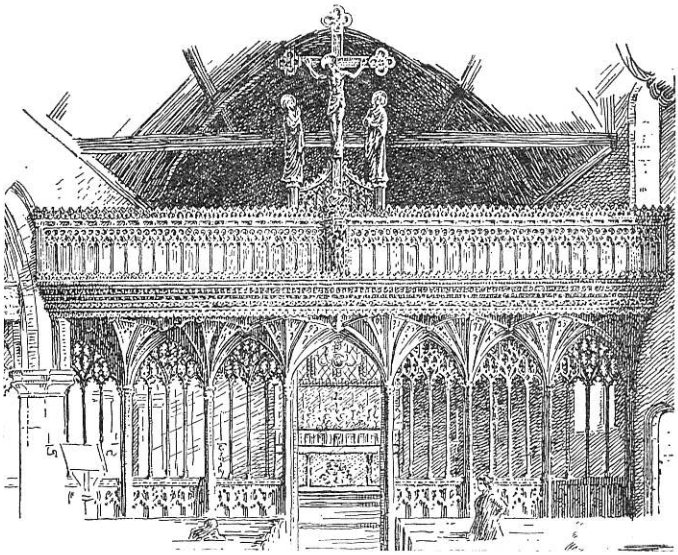
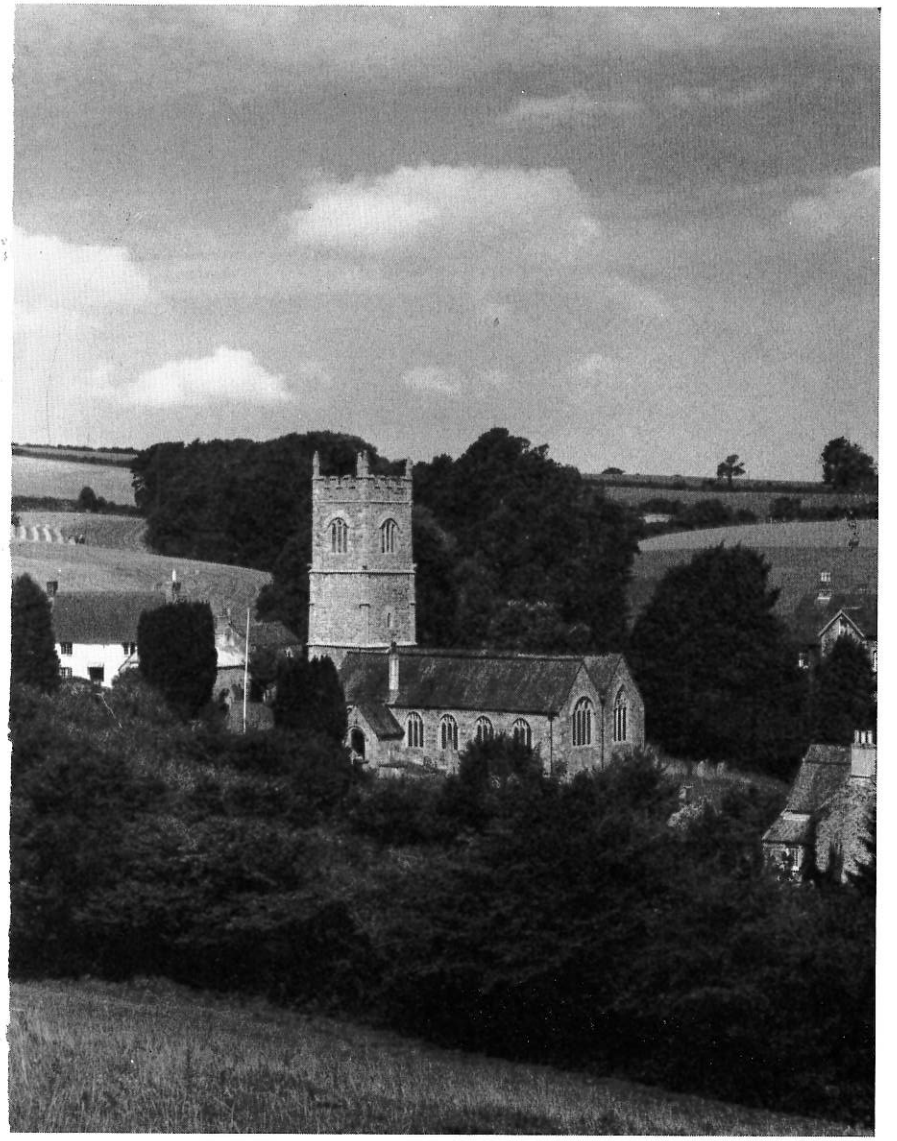
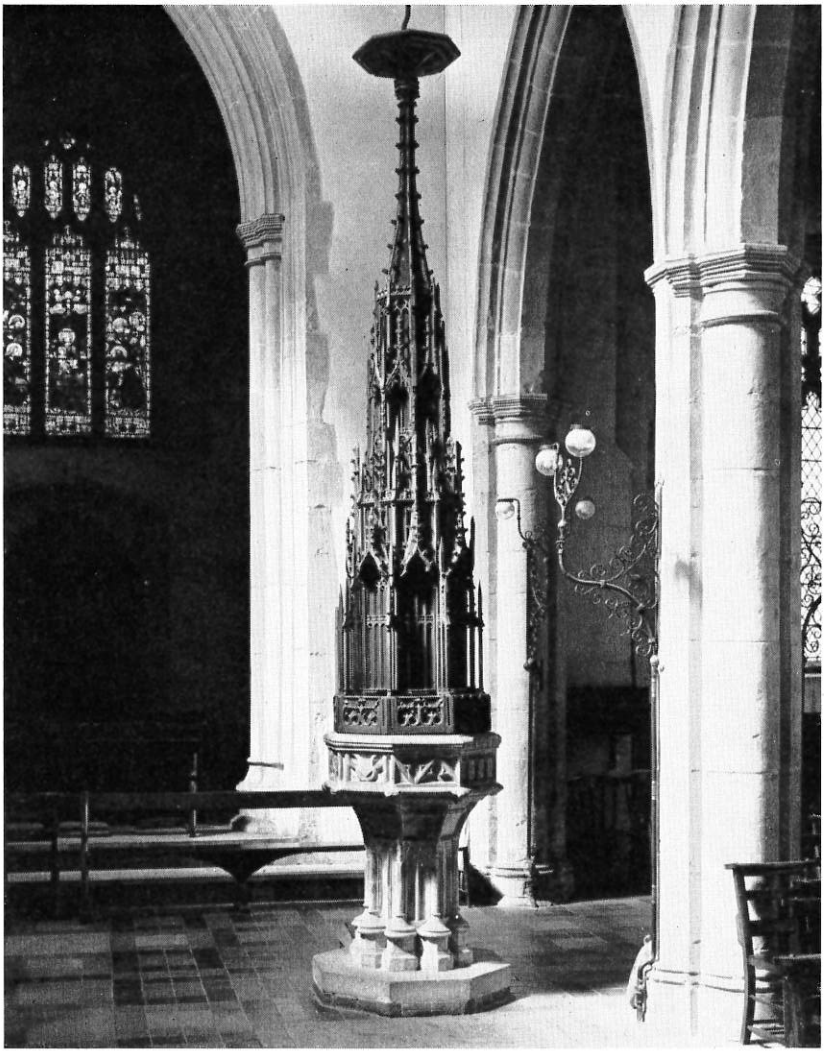


Fig. 10 The rood screen and loft at St Michael's Church, Minehead, in Somerset. Notice the Rood, the crucified figure of our Lord beside which stand his mother and St John, 'the Disciple whom Jesus loved'.



6. The parish church of St Clement, near Truro, Cornwall



7. The font of St Gregory's Church, Sudbury, Suffolk

from the altar, accompanied by one server carrying the book and two others with candles.

The *chancel* is the part of the church used by the clergy and choir, and is usually raised above the level of the nave floor. In it you will find *stalls* for the use of those who sit there, the eastern part being railed off to form the *sanctuary*. The sanctuary is the most sacred part of the church, and contains the altar, which is used for the Holy Communion.

If a church is cruciform, the parts which jut out from the main body of the building are called *transepts*. One of them may have an additional altar which is used for week-day services when the number of people attending is often very small.

The *vestry* is a room used by the clergy and choir for changing into their robes. In the vestry there is usually a safe, which is used for keeping the communion plate and the registers containing the names of all who have been baptised or married in the church, or whose funerals have taken place there.[1]

Now let us go back to the door and look at the furnishings of the church. The first time that a baby is brought into church is for his baptism. This takes place at the *font*, a large bowl which contains the water used for the service; it is usually mounted on an elaborately carved pedestal. The font is usually just inside the door: the baby is starting his journey through life, and later he will move farther into the Church. At his baptism he is

[1] The keeping of parish registers dates from 1538 when Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's Vicar-General, ordered that a book and a coffer with two locks should be provided, and that the parson of the parish should enter the week's baptisms, marriages, and burials. Few parishes have a complete set of records going back to 1538—in many places they have been neglected and have suffered from damp or fire. Others were destroyed in air-raids. These registers must not be confused with the Registrar-General's records of births, marriages and deaths which are kept at Somerset House in London and which date back to 1837.

given his Christian names, and we will imagine that the baby we are going to watch is called John.

The baby is too young to understand what is happening, but his parents and godparents make certain promises for him, in particular that he will 'keep God's holy will and commandments'. The service consists of two parts. After the promises have been made, water is poured on the baby's head and he is given his Christian name 'in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost'. The sign of the Cross is then traced on his forehead. As you know, cattle in some parts of the world are branded so that everyone may know their owner. Although the Cross on the baby's forehead is traced only with a finger and will not leave a mark which can be seen, the idea is the same—from this moment the child is marked as belonging to Christ. The second part of the service, during which the baby is received into the Church as one of its members, follows.

As John grows up his father and mother bring him to church every Sunday. He sits with them in one of the pews in the nave, and watches carefully what is happening. If he goes with his parents to a celebration of the Holy Communion he may remain in his pew whilst they go to the altar to receive their communion, although in some churches it is now quite usual for the whole family to kneel at the altar rail—even those who are too young to be confirmed or to make their communion.

Quite often, however, he may go to Morning or Evening Prayer. These services are conducted principally from the *priest's stall*, just inside the chancel. The lessons are read from the *lectern*, a reading desk standing just outside the chancel arch. The book-rest on the lectern is frequently in the form of an eagle with its wings spread out

in flight (Fig. 11). The eagle is the king of the birds, and it is believed that he can fly higher and longer than any other bird. By placing the Bible on the eagle's back we show, in a kind of picture language, the word of God being carried on strong wings to the ends of the earth. The eagle is also the emblem of St John, the writer of the fourth Gospel, about whom St Jerome said 'he soared aloft to look into the face of God'.

Just across the nave from the lectern is a raised platform of stone or wood. This is the *pulpit* from which the sermon is preached (Fig. 12). Sermons today are usually quite short, but at one time they were very long indeed. If we had visited a church a century or more ago, we should have seen an hour-glass rather like a large egg-timer standing on the side of the pulpit. Few people carried watches in

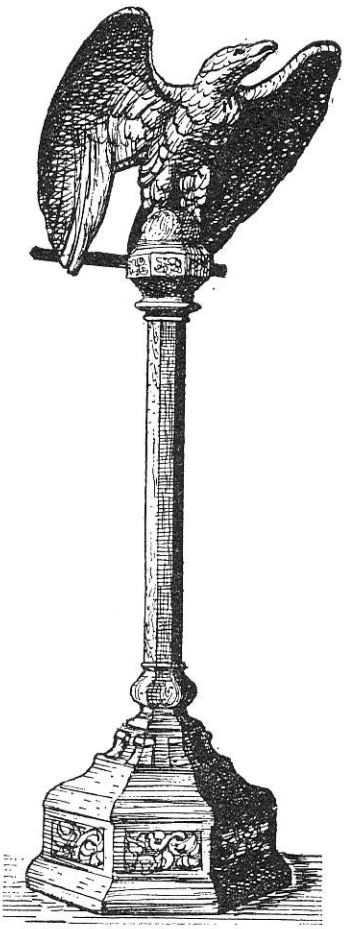


Fig. 11 A lectern in the form of an eagle.

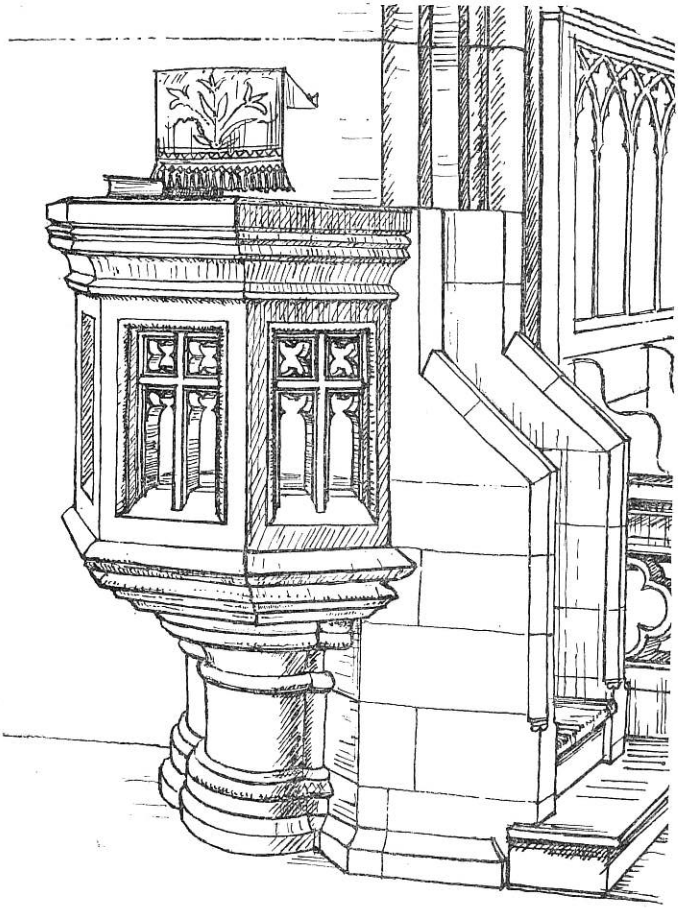


Fig. 12 A conventional pulpit.

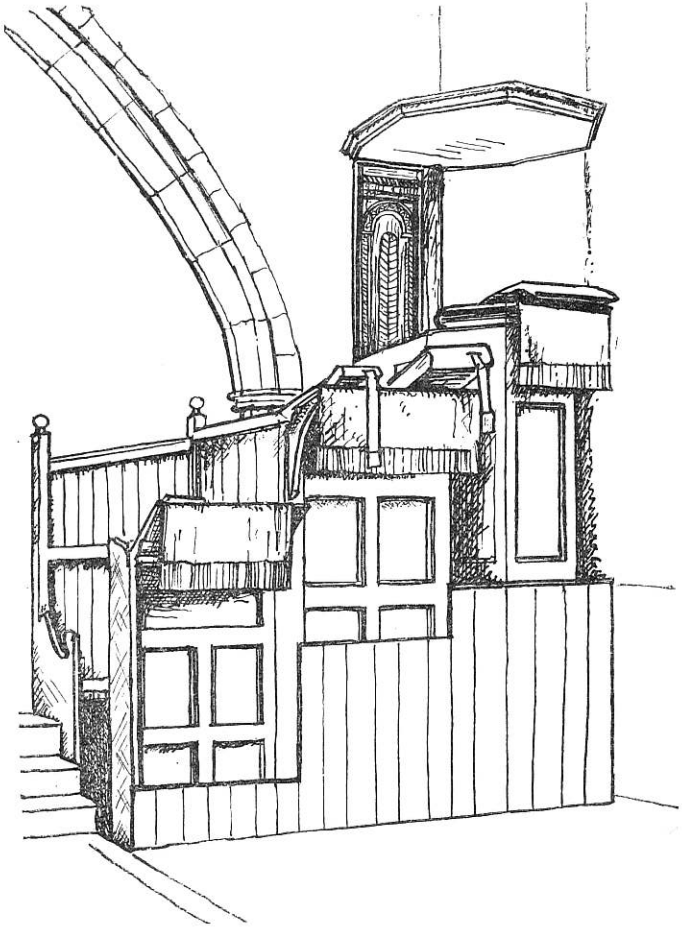


Fig. 13 A 'three-decker' pulpit. The clerk led the responses from the lowest desk; the priest read the service from the middle 'deck', and climbed to the top level to preach.

those days, and the hour-glass helped the preacher to judge the length of time for which he had been speaking. There is a story of one vicar who, as the sand ran out from the top half, would turn the timer over, saying: 'Now, my friends, we will have another glass!' In some churches the pulpit was once in three tiers. The clerk sat in the bottom storey to lead the congregation in the responses, whilst the priest read his part of the service from the middle section instead of from a stall in the chancel. He would climb to the top level to preach his sermon (Fig. 13). These 'three-decker' pulpits are now very rare, but the remains of one bearing the date 1619 may be seen at Great Ashfield in Suffolk.

At last John is ready to move a step farther in his journey through the Church. He has been taught a number of things about his religion whilst attending a course of lessons given by his parish clergy. As a result he now has a deeper understanding of the privileges and responsibility of Church membership. He is now old enough to understand the promises which his parents and godparents made for him at his baptism, and to confirm that he intends to go on keeping them by renewing them himself to the bishop. When a bishop visits a parish church he normally uses a chair, often elaborately carved, which is placed on the north side of the sanctuary. For a confirmation, however, the bishop's chair is brought from the sanctuary and placed on the chancel step facing down the nave. When his turn comes John leaves his place in one of the front pews and kneels in front of the bishop, who is sitting in his chair.

John has moved forward from the font, by way of the pews, to the chancel step. He is now a full member of the Church, and can take yet another step forward. Soon

after his confirmation, he kneels for the first time at the *communion rail*, which divides the sanctuary from the rest of the chancel, and makes his first communion. Churches did not always have these rails; they were first placed there about three hundred years ago. In those days dogs were frequently to be seen prowling around churches, and Archbishop Laud ordered the rails to be erected after it had been reported to him that a dog had found its way into the sanctuary of a church and stolen the consecrated bread. At Exeter Cathedral the nuisance was so great that a man was employed to keep the dogs away, and you may still see the dog whipper's chamber, where he lived, over the north aisle.

The principal piece of furniture in the sanctuary (Fig. 14) is the *altar*. This is usually made of wood, but it is sometimes of stone. During the celebration of the Holy Communion it is covered with a 'fair linen cloth', but if you could see the top of the altar you would probably find five crosses carved in it to represent the five wounds of our Lord, one in each hand and foot, and one where his side was pierced by the centurion's spear. The front of the altar is usually covered with a coloured cloth, called a *frontal*, which is changed according to the season of the year. The ordinary colour is green, the colour of Nature, and this is used for days when there are no special commemorations. For the other seasons there are several different colour schemes, but, in general, you will find that the festivals of our Lord (Christmas, Easter, and the Ascension) and his mother, Trinity Sunday, and certain saints' days are white. White is also used for baptisms, weddings, and the feast of the dedication of a church. Red, the colour of fire and of blood, is used on Whitsunday (to represent the tongues of fire which brought the Holy

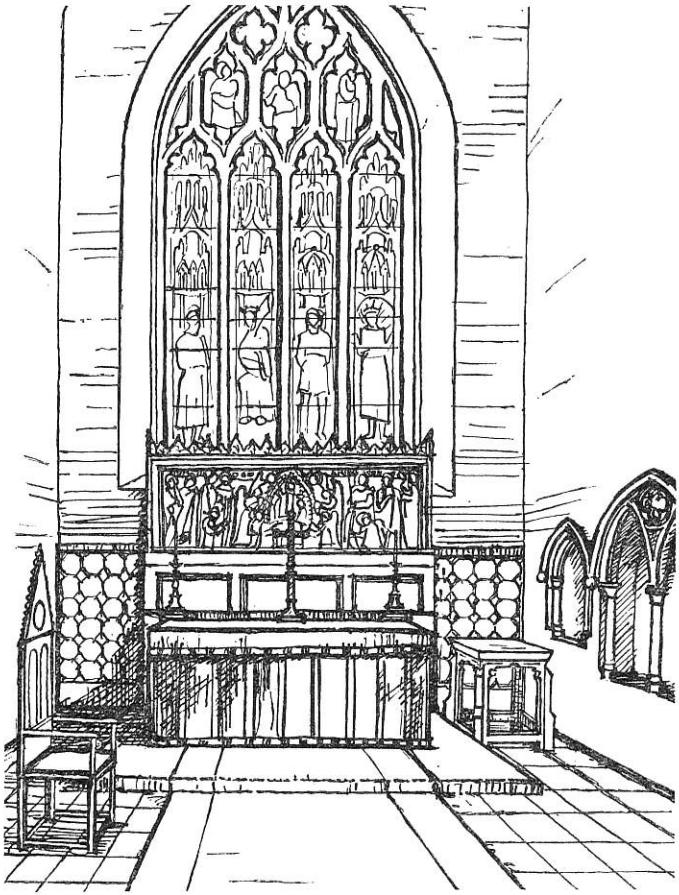


Fig. 14 The sanctuary of a church. The small archway on the right is a piscina, a basin with a drain, used for washing the sacred vessels. Next to it are the sedilia—stone benches for the use of clergy.

Spirit to the waiting disciples) and on the feasts of martyrs (with certain exceptions). Seasons of penitence and preparation for the great festivals of Christmas and Easter are violet, but in some churches a rough off-white material, something like sackcloth, is used during Lent. This is called Lenten white. During Lent all the movable furnishings, such as crosses, are either taken away or covered with hoods of violet or Lenten white. During Advent and Lent there are no flowers in the church, and in many churches the candles are not lighted. Violet or black is used for funerals. The priests' vestments match the colour of the season.

A *cross*, flanked by two or six *candles*, stands on the altar or on a small shelf behind it; two large candles stand on the floor in front, and slightly to each side, of the altar. In some churches an additional candle, called the *Paschal Candle*, burns on the north (or left-hand) side of the altar from Easter Eve until Ascension Day, to represent the risen Lord from the time of the resurrection until the ascension. Five grains of incense are fixed to this candle to represent the wounds of our Lord.

In some churches it is customary, after a celebration of the Holy Communion, to keep or 'reserve', a small quantity of the consecrated bread in the church. Sometimes wine is reserved as well. This is so that some consecrated elements are always ready for an emergency—as when someone is seriously ill—at any time of the day or night. Sometimes the elements are reserved in a small cupboard, called a *tabernacle*, at the back of one of the altars. In other churches they are kept in a cupboard called an *aumbry* in the north wall of the sanctuary. It is customary to keep a light burning in front of the reserved sacrament.

On the south side of the altar is the *credence table*. This is used for the vessels containing the wine, water, and bread before they are ready to be consecrated on the altar. In old churches you may find three canopied seats in the stonework of the south wall; they are called the *sedilia*, and are for the use of the priest, the deacon and the sub-deacon at the Holy Communion. Beside them you may see a small basin with a drain in the centre; this is the *piscina*, and was at one time used for washing the vessels used on the altar. The only other piece of furniture in the sanctuary is the *bishop's chair* which stands on the north side, except when it is moved to the chancel step for the service of Confirmation or for the institution of a new vicar.

You may see a small bell or gong standing at the foot of the altar steps. This is the modern form of a bell which once hung outside the church, above the chancel roof. It is called the *sanctus bell*, and it was rung during the most sacred parts of the Mass (as the service of Holy Communion was always then called), so that people who, for one reason or another had been prevented from attending, might know that the bread and wine were being consecrated. In the days when services were said in Latin, the opening words of the consecration were *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus* ('Holy, holy, holy'), and the bell was called the sanctus bell because it was rung at this point. In churches where it is used today it is rung three times at the words 'Holy, holy, holy', once at the beginning of the prayer of consecration, three times at the elevation of the bread, three times at the elevation of the chalice, and three times as the priest makes his own communion.

If you were to go into a Roman Catholic church, you would find that most of the furnishings are the same as those in a Church of England, but they are often more

elaborate. You would also find a statue of the infant Jesus in his mother's arms in one of the side chapels, and there are usually more altars than in an Anglican Church. Round the walls you would see fourteen pictures representing scenes leading up to the crucifixion. These pictures are called the *Stations of the Cross* and are also to be found in some Anglican churches.

To some extent, therefore, you would still feel at home in a Roman Catholic church because both there, and in a Church of England, the most important furnishing is the altar, and this occupies the position of honour in the church. In both cases the church is catholic in design because its principal service is the sacrament of the altar—the Holy Communion or Mass. If you were to go into a nonconformist church you would find a vast difference in the arrangement of the building because, in the gathered Churches, the sacrament of the word (reading from the Bible and preaching) is regarded as of equal importance with the sacrament of the altar (the Holy Communion). In these churches the rostrum and the communion table are both placed centrally. The rostrum is a platform raised at the front of the church and used as reading desk, lectern, and pulpit. Instead of the altar, a plain communion table stands below the rostrum.[1] You will find no statues, although there may be stained-glass windows and a cross on the cloth hanging from the reading desk. The whole effect is much more simple and severe because members of these Churches believe that elaborate art may distract the worshipper's mind so that, in time, he may come to worship the beautiful things around him instead of God. In recent years, however, there has been a tendency for new

[1] This arrangemet symbolises the fact that the sacrament of the word rises naturally from the sacrament of the altar.

nonconformist churches to copy the general layout of a parish church, but in a simpler form. An example of this may be seen in the only nonconformist church in the City of London. In the new City Temple, opened in 1958 to replace the former building which had been destroyed by bombs, a stone communion table has been placed centrally against the wall, and there are reading desks, a lectern, and a pulpit instead of the more usual rostrum.

In a Baptist church you will find one feature which is not often to be found elsewhere. The Baptists believe that baptism should be administered only to those who are old enough to understand the service for themselves, and that total immersion is closer to the custom of the early Church than the Anglican form of baptism by sprinkling. There is no font in a Baptist church: in its place is a baptistery in which it is possible to immerse completely those who are being baptised. When not in use the baptistery is usually covered by a false floor. Occasionally, as in Lambeth Parish Church, there is a baptistery of this kind in Anglican churches.

4

The Ministry of the Church

If you look at your Prayer Book, you will see that it contains services for the *making* of deacons, the *ordination* of priests, and the *consecration* of bishops. These are the three orders of the ministry of the Church, and all clergy belong to one or more of them.[1]

The first ministers of the Church were the apostles amongst whom were numbered the twelve disciples of our Lord and some others, notably St Paul. As time went by it became necessary to make arrangements for carrying on the Church's work after the death of the apostles, and this was done by choosing men who were obviously devoted followers of our Lord in every way.

At first there seems to have been no distinction between bishops and priests (or presbyters, as the latter were once called). Each local Church was often cut off from its nearest neighbour by many miles, and the man chosen by the apostles became its priest-bishop. Contacts between the Churches were limited to the visits of the apostles and letters. After the death of the apostles it was necessary to find men who would be able to visit a number of Churches to keep them in touch with each other, to help them with their problems, and to make sure that they were maintaining the high standards which our Lord

[1] A priest is still a deacon, and a bishop remains both deacon and priest.

demands. The men chosen to do this work were given a number of Churches to supervise and, in time, the term 'bishop' was used only for these overseers, the men in charge of the local Churches being known as presbyters or priests.

Deacons have always been a separate order, and we can read in the Acts of the Apostles the story of how the first seven deacons were appointed to help the apostles in their work.[1] It was the custom of the Church at that time to distribute daily gifts of food to the widows and orphans of Christians who had died, and this was first done by the apostles themselves. Sooner or later the Greek-speaking Christians found that they had been forgotten, and they complained bitterly about this unfairness. St Peter decided that the chief work of the apostles was to lead the Church's worship, and that they could not be expected to neglect this duty in order to distribute charity. He therefore arranged for the appointment of seven men whose special work for the Church was to distribute alms. It was one of these men, Stephen, who became the first martyr.[2] Although the seven are not called deacons in the New Testament they are usually looked upon as the first members of that order.

The threefold ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons has continued in the catholic Church until the present day. Each time a deacon is made, a priest ordained, or a bishop consecrated, it is by the laying-on of hands as a sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit. When your rector or vicar was ordained, it was by a bishop who had himself been ordained in exactly the same way, and so on, in a long chain which, many people believe, reaches back to the apostles themselves. Whether this is so or not, we must

[1] Acts 6.1–6. [2] Acts 6.9–8.1.

remember that it is our Lord himself, and not the bishop, who ordains men. Our Lord chooses certain men to be his ministers and gives them the power of the Holy Spirit to help them in their work; the bishop's part is to lay his hands on the ordinand's head as a sign that the Church believes that this power has been given to a particular man who, by this ceremony, is authorised to act in the name of Christ.

There are only three orders of the ministry. Bishops, priests, and deacons may hold different preferments—as Church appointments are called—but these can be changed or resigned. Ordination sets a man permanently apart and is said to be indelible; like an indelible pencil, its mark cannot be completely removed. Most deacons are assistant curates, but a priest may be an assistant curate, a vicar, a rector, a chaplain, a rural dean, an archdeacon, a prebendary, a canon, or a dean. It does not matter which of these preferments he may hold—his order is the priesthood. A bishop may hold any of the preferments open to a priest or he may be a suffragan bishop, an assistant bishop, a diocesan bishop, or an archbishop.

There is, at the present time, a grave shortage of clergy to staff our parishes. Since 1861 the population of the country has increased from 20 to 46 millions; during the same time the number of clergy at work in the parishes has fallen by six thousand. Yet the Church is still most particular in its choice of men to be ordained to serve in one of the three orders, and rightly so. Not all those who offer themselves for the ministry are accepted, as this difficult work requires great courage, much wisdom, and a sincere desire to place the work of God above everything else in the world.

To understand this more clearly let us follow the career of John, whose baptism and confirmation we watched in the last chapter.

After being confirmed he was a regular member of the congregation, Sunday by Sunday. He had joined the choir when he was eight, and later he helped in the Sunday school. When he was about sixteen he felt that God was calling him to become a priest. At first he put the idea on one side as being rather silly; his father wanted him to be a doctor, and he was doing very well at school. He knew that if he entered the ministry he would almost certainly spend the rest of his days on a very much smaller income than he could earn as a doctor. But the more he tried to forget the whole business, the more it forced itself on his mind. For a couple of years he fought against it, and then he went to see his vicar.

The vicar also seemed to have some doubts. He told John how hard the work was—that there was a great deal more to it than just taking services on Sundays, and there were often very unpleasant tasks to be faced. He added that he sometimes felt he was doing no good and that he might as well throw the whole thing up and find an easier way of earning a better living. Did John really feel he could face a life of that kind? Finally, the vicar told him to go away and think it over for at least a week.

This time John went to his father. He told him what had happened, and added: 'Really, I think he feels I am not the right sort of person for that kind of job.' For a few days he thought it would be better to drop the idea completely, but then a new thought crept into his mind. Although the week was not yet up he telephoned the vicar, determined to ask him a question.

'It's nice to hear from you, John,' said the vicar. 'Can I do anything for you?'

John paused for a moment before he replied: 'Yes, there is something. I've been thinking over what you said to me the other evening about all the difficulties and disappointments of your job. Was it because you think I'm not cut out to be a parson, or because you really want to see if I've got enough courage to face up to it, knowing what's in store for me?'

There was a chuckle from the other end of the line.

'Perhaps I'm not as crafty as I thought I was,' said the vicar, 'but I'm going to leave you to think that one out as well!'

So when John went to the vicarage a week later and told the vicar that he still believed that God wanted him to be a priest, he met with a very different reception.

'Well, my boy,' said the vicar, 'it wasn't fair to let you go into it with your eyes closed, was it? Still, I'm very glad I didn't put you off completely. You'll never be very wealthy so far as money is concerned, but you will have the greatest reward that any man can have: the satisfaction of knowing that you are doing the most worthwhile job in the world.'

A few weeks later John had a note from his bishop, asking him to call to see him. This visit was followed by other interviews with various officials of the diocese and, finally, the selection conference.[1]

For this John joined a party with a group of other young men from different parts of the country, all of them seeking ordination. They lived together for several days, listened to talks on the life and work of the clergy, had discussions, played games, and had interviews with

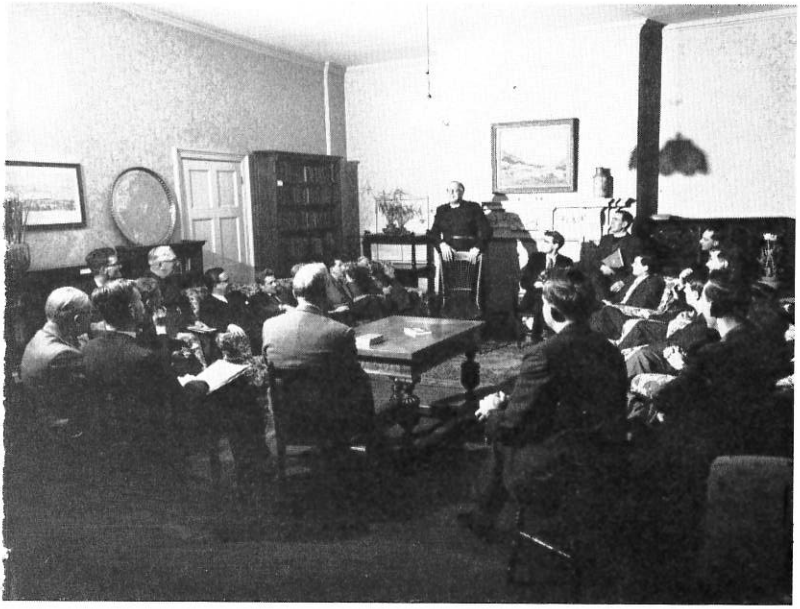
[1] See Plate 8a.

the five clergy and laymen on the selection panel. Each man was carefully watched all the time in order to decide whether he was really suitable to do the work of a parson in these days. Soon after he returned home John had another letter from his bishop saying he was glad the selection panel had decided to recommend him, and that he would be able to ordain him if he completed his course of studies satisfactorily.

A few months after his eighteenth birthday John started a new life at the University. For three years he worked hard—and played hard. At the end of that time he had been awarded a degree, and had secured the University's colours in cricket.[1] Two more years of training still lay ahead of him. At the University he had studied history; now came the course which was to fit him for the day-to-day business of a parson's work. He had to make a detailed study of the Bible, and the teaching of the Church. He had to spend several weeks helping in a parish to learn something of the rough and tumble of parochial life. He had to learn about the organisation of the Church of England, and about the many tasks which fall to the lot of a parish priest. He also had to pass the General Ordination Examination during this period.

Shortly before he finished his course he had to go home for another interview with his bishop, who told him that he was prepared to offer him a post—called a title—in a parish about twenty miles from his home, and asked him to go to see the vicar there. This meant that the bishop had found John work as an assistant curate, and that soon

[1] John undertook the full course of training starting with a grammar-school education and leading to a university degree. Many men receive a less rigorous preparation and undertake the whole of their education, after leaving school, at a theological college. Much depends on the candidate's background, and no one need be afraid to offer himself for the ministry of the Church if he feels that he has been called to do so by God, even though he may not have been to a grammar school.

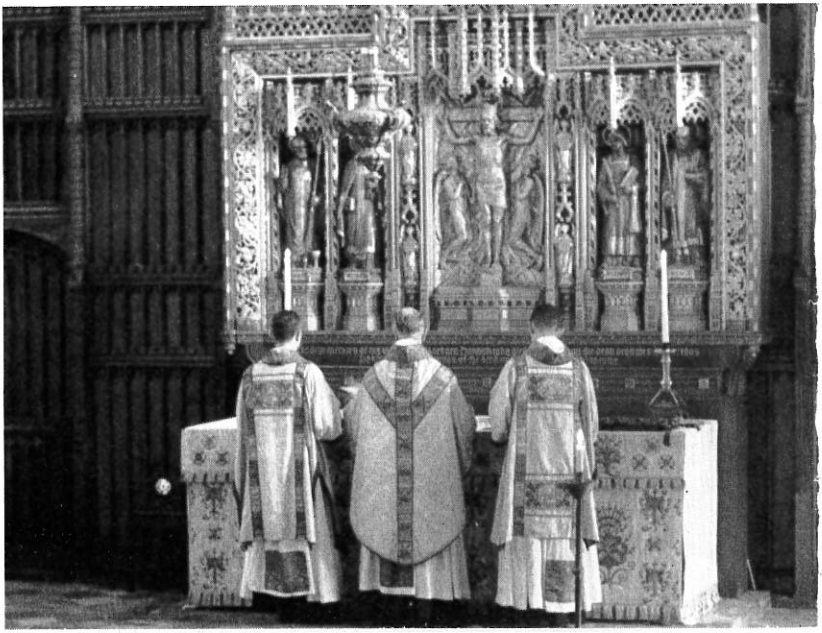


8.*a* C.A.C.T.M. selection conference

b The laying on of hands at Ordination

9.*a* The Bishop of Durham demands admittance to his cathedral church

b A celebration of Holy Communion at Chichester Cathedral



after he had finished his studies he would be made a deacon.

No man may become a deacon until he is twenty-three years old. All the time he had been at the University and theological college John's work had been carefully watched, and as much information as possible gathered about him. Even at this stage it would have been better to advise him not to go any farther if this had seemed to be the wisest course. But John finished his course with flying colours early in May, and on Trinity Sunday he made his way to the cathedral where the bishop was to make him a deacon.

The making of deacons and the ordination of priests are often performed at the same time, although the two services are quite distinct. Like all the important services of the Church of England they take place within the framework of a celebration of the Holy Communion, and one interesting fact about the ordination service is that the sermon comes at the beginning. An ordination usually lasts about two hours.

When John was made a deacon there were five other young men taking the same step, and four who were being ordained as priests. The making of deacons came first and the bishop, sitting in a chair in the middle of the choir, asked the archdeacon if he was satisfied that the men before him were suitable to be admitted to the order of deacons. Later, he gave the congregation an opportunity of saying if they had any objection to any of the ordinands. After he had read a long description of the duties of a deacon he laid his hands on each of the candidates as they knelt before him, and admitted them to 'the office of a deacon in the Church of God'.[1] A white

[1] See Plate 8b.

stole was fastened sashwise across John's left shoulder, and he was given a copy of the New Testament.

When he returned to the vestry one of the cathedral vergers handed John a letter, saying that he had been asked to give it to him. It was from his old vicar but, as he first glanced at the envelope, he was on the point of telling the verger that it was not for him—it was the first time he had received an envelope addressed to 'The Reverend John White'.

Within a week John was at work. As an assistant curate he was given enough work to keep him very busy during the week, especially as he still had to do some study. In church he assisted at Morning and Evening Prayer, and preached occasionally. As a deacon he could not celebrate the Holy Communion, but he was allowed to administer the cup to the people. Every Monday morning he attended the parish staff meeting and there, and in chats with his new vicar, he soon learned a great deal about his work. He passed his priest's examination and, a year after he had been made a deacon, he returned to the cathedral for his ordination as a priest.

He found there the five men who had been made deacons at the same time as himself; actually he had seen a good deal of them during the year, as they had all attended classes arranged by the bishop. There were also several new candidates who were to be made deacons before the ordination of the priests began. Once again John knelt before the bishop and, this time, was 'admitted to the office of a priest in the Church of God'. His stole, which he was wearing sashwise for the last time, was unfastened and hung round both shoulders. On this occasion he was presented with a copy of the whole Bible. Now he was a priest John could take all the services, except

those which are reserved to a bishop (confirmation and ordination), and he celebrated the Holy Communion for the first time a few days after he had been ordained.

John became a vicar himself after he had served for six or seven years as an assistant curate in three rather different parishes. Once all the arrangements had been made he moved into his own vicarage, but before he could begin his work he had to be instituted and inducted.

When an incumbent is instituted it is usual for the bishop to visit the parish church where the priest is to serve. The new incumbent must make certain promises, after which the bishop hands him a parchment which authorises him to act on the bishop's behalf as the rector or vicar of the parish. An interesting ceremony called the induction follows, and is usually performed by the archdeacon. The new incumbent is taken to the door of the church, where his hand is laid on the handle to represent the fact that he is taking possession of his parish church. He then tolls the bell to announce this fact to the people of the parish who happen not to be in the church. He is then taken in procession to the font, the lectern, the pulpit, and the altar, and at each place he is reminded of the duties which he must carry out there. Finally, the archdeacon places him in his stall, where he leads his new parishioners in the Lord's Prayer for the first time.

Most of the clergy spend the whole of their working lives as priests, but a few are admitted to the highest order in the Church, that of bishop. John proved himself to be a hard-working and successful parish priest, and this was noticed by all sorts of people with whom he came in contact.

One day an official-looking envelope fell through his letter-box. The letter inside told him that a bishopric in

another part of the country had become vacant, and that the Prime Minister would like to nominate him to the Queen for this appointment. The letter came as a great surprise to John, but, before it was written, all sorts of discussions had been going on. One of the bishops had felt that he was getting too old for his work, and had retired some months earlier. At once people began to look round for a successor. The finding of new bishops is officially one of the duties of the Prime Minister, though he usually consults the Archbishop of Canterbury who is more likely to know of suitable clergy for this important and difficult work. Many clergymen were considered, and careful enquiries were made as to their suitability for appointment in that particular diocese. At last the discussions reached the stage where both the Archbishop and the Prime Minister felt that John was the most suitable candidate. It was then that he received the letter asking him whether he would accept the preferment if it were offered to him.

When he had got over the first shock, John was very doubtful. He liked parish work, and he was afraid that as a bishop he would have fewer opportunities of working in close contact with the ordinary members of the Church. He would get to know a great many people slightly, but very few would become close friends like the people of his parish. Most important of all he did not feel sure that he was worthy to undertake the work of a father in God not only to the people, but also the clergy, of a whole diocese. It was difficult to get advice, because the Prime Minister's letter was confidential. However, his old vicar, whom he had first consulted about ordination, was living in retirement not many miles away. John went to see him.

This time, there was no doubt about the older priest's advice. 'You must accept,' said John's old friend. 'You may be quite certain that you would never have received that letter unless people were certain you could do the work. So far as your own worthiness is concerned you may be sure that if you try to do your work as well as you can, God will help you to fit yourself for it. After all, it is the Holy Spirit who has guided men to call you to this work. It doesn't surprise me in the least; I always thought you would end up as a bishop.'

So John said: 'Yes', and shortly afterwards the Prime Minister sent his recommendation to the Queen. The cathedral chapter of John's new diocese—the area ruled by a bishop—soon received the royal permission to elect him as their bishop, and they did so gladly. The arrangements for his move went forward at great speed but, even so, it was several months before he was summoned by the Archbishop to be consecrated.

The consecration of a bishop is similar to the ordination of a priest, but is almost always performed by an archbishop and it usually takes place in an important cathedral or church. Three other new bishops were consecrated at the same time as John, one to work in this country, the others for work in missionary dioceses overseas. Wearing his bishop's robes for the first time, John listened carefully as the Archbishop read out to him the duties of a bishop. He then knelt to receive the laying-on of hands. He was now a bishop, but he had still to take possession of his cathedral. The Queen had already ordered the cathedral authorities to make the arrangements for his enthronement, and this took place at a special service when the cathedral was packed with people from all over the diocese.

Wearing cope and mitre, John stood outside the great

cathedral doors with his bishop's crook in his hand. As the hour for the enthronement boomed out from the tower overhead, he raised the crosier and knocked three times on the door with it.[1] The doors swung open slowly and he saw the crowded church, with the choir and high officers of the cathedral, the diocese, and the county waiting to receive him. Announcing that he had been elected bishop of the diocese, John asked leave of the dean to take possession of his throne in the cathedral and, as the dean granted permission, a fanfare of trumpets welcomed the new bishop.

The colourful procession made its way to the high altar, near which, within a few minutes, the bishop was seated in his throne. From the desk before it he led the representatives of his new people in the Lord's Prayer, and later he spoke to them from the pulpit. A new bishop had begun his work.

So far, we have spoken of the ministry chiefly so far as the clergy are concerned. The word 'ministry' means service, and there are also many opportunities for those who have not taken holy orders to serve God. All members of the Church can serve in some way, even if it is only by regular attendance at church and the giving of money to maintain its work.

There are other ways, too, in which the laity (those who are not clergy) can serve. Some may become choirboys and choirmen, others may be chosen to assist as servers at the Holy Communion. Yet others may become lay readers, men who are licensed by the bishop to help in the conduct of Morning and Evening Prayer and on certain other occasions. Women may become deaconesses or parish workers.

[1] See Plate 9a.

There is also an opportunity for service by those who do not feel called to take an active part in leading the worship of the Church. Nowadays there are many committees which deal with various aspects of the Church's work. Of these, one of the most important is the Parochial Church Council, which handles the parish funds. Some laymen may aspire to the ancient and important office of churchwarden: the churchwardens are the bishop's officers in the parish, and are expected to help the vicar in some of his duties, especially in the care of the parish church. When there is no vicar the churchwardens are usually, though not always, appointed to maintain the worship of the Church until a new incumbent arrives. Sidesmen are also appointed to help the churchwardens in maintaining order in the church, and in taking the collections.

Even those who do not feel that God has called them to take any official position in the Church may serve as an example to others by living their ordinary lives all the better because they are Christians.

The Roman Catholic ministry is similar to that of the Church of England, but there are several minor orders through which a man must pass before he becomes a deacon.[1] In the nonconformist Churches there is only one rank, that of minister. In the Congregational and Baptist orders a man must be called to the ministry of a particular Church before he is ordained, and his ordination takes place in that church. Since each Church is self-governing he remains a minister only so long as he is exercising the ministry of a Church, although there are now arrangements by which those who have retired, or who are engaged in other work connected with the Church,

[1] The four minor orders are those of porter, lector, exorcist, and acolyte. In the Roman Catholic Church there is also an order of sub-deacons, which is a major order and must be served before a man may become a deacon.

may remain accredited ministers. The Congregationalists now appoint a number of moderators, each with a part of the country—called a province—in which he is responsible for the general oversight of the Churches, but the moderators have no power to overrule the local Churches and their chief function is to advise.

In the Methodist Church ministers are appointed to their Churches by the annual conference of the Methodist Church and are usually moved to another circuit, as a group of churches is called, every three years. Their ordination takes place at Conference. The senior minister of each group of Methodist Churches is known as the superintendent minister.

Naturally there are opportunities for the laity to serve God in the Roman Catholic and the nonconformist Churches just as there are in the Church of England.

5

The Dress of the Clergy

IN the early days of the Church the clergy wore their everyday clothes both when going about the streets and when taking services. As the Church spread and fashions changed, the custom grew up of using, for the conduct of services, the clothes which had been in fashion in New Testament times. Most of the robes which you see in churches today have a very long history and, with certain changes, are the same as the dress of all the early Christians, clergy and laity alike.

In this country the clergy did not wear any distinguishing dress out of church until about a century ago, when the custom grew up of wearing the *clerical collar*. This was borrowed from the Roman Catholic clergy, and has now become universal in the Church of England as it helps to mark out the clergy for people who may need their help. Some of the clergy, including bishops, archdeacons, and the deans of cathedral churches, also wear *gaiters* and a short *apron*. The apron is really a shortened form of the cassock which was convenient when men travelled on horseback. When bishops were visiting their dioceses, or archdeacons their archdeaconries, they travelled from parish to parish by horse. The ordinary cassock is too long for riding, so they adopted the apron.

Bishops also wear a purple stock—a piece of material

covering the front of the shirt—with the clerical collar, and a *pectoral cross* round their necks. Bishops, the clergy of cathedrals, archdeacons, and rural deans may also be distinguished by the small *rosette*, worn like a school badge on the front of their hats.

The robes worn during services may be divided into two groups: choir robes and vestments. *Choir robes* are worn by members of the choir as well as by the clergy, and may be used for any service. The *vestments* are prim-

Fig. 15 Two priests wearing choir robes—cassock, surplice, hood and scarf.

arily intended for use at the Holy Communion though some may be worn on other occasions. The underlying garment of both choir robes and vestments is the *cassock*, a long black coat reaching to the ankles. In the Middle Ages a robe of this kind was worn by clergy and laity alike, and formed part of their ordinary dress. It is still the official dress of the parish priest, although nowadays it is usually worn only in church or on the way to services. In the Chapels Royal and some cathedrals the cassock is scarlet instead of black, and some churches have adopted a blue or purple cassock for the choir. The garment is fastened round the waist with a *cincture* (a broad band of material), a *girdle*, or a leather *belt*. Bishops often wear a purple cassock.

We will look at the remaining choir robes (Fig. 15) before considering the vestments. Over the cassock is worn a loose-fitting white linen garment, with wide, open sleeves. This is the *surplice*, and is the only part of the robes which has never formed part of everyday dress. It came into use soon after the time of William the Conqueror, when cassocks were often lined with fur to keep out the cold in the unheated churches. It was difficult to pull the narrow sleeves of the alb[1] over these lined cassocks, and the surplice took its place for all services except the Holy Communion. Sometimes a very short form of the surplice is worn, trimmed with lace and ending at the waist. This is the *cotta*, and is copied from the continental Roman Catholic use.

Clergy and laymen who have passed the examinations leading to the degree of a university wear the *hood* of that degree hanging at the back of the surplice. The colours of the hoods are different for the various degrees and

[1] See page 64.

universities, and it is possible to recognise the wearer's degree by the hood he is wearing. The hood was, of course, the ordinary head-dress during the Middle Ages, but it would not be advisable to try wearing the delicately coloured silk linings of a university hood on a head covered with hair-oil! During the war of 1939–45, however, the rationing regulations recognised the original use of the hood. All clothes were rationed during this period, and could not be bought without giving up coupons. Headwear was the only exception and—although they are never now used for this purpose—university hoods, like hats and caps, were unrationed.

Over the hood is worn the *scarf* or tippet, a long strip of black cloth which was once part of the hood. It is now worn round the neck and stretches on both sides to below the knee. The scarves of cathedral clergy sometimes have the seal, or coat-of-arms, of the cathedral embroidered on them, and Chaplains to the Forces wear scarves bearing the royal arms. Lay readers wear a blue scarf or, in some dioceses, a coloured collar from which hangs a metal badge.

In churches where the services are fairly simple in form choir robes are used for all services. For celebrations of the Holy Communion, Baptism, and the Marriage service the hood is not often worn, and the scarf is then replaced by the stole, which is described below with the other vestments.

For the Holy Communion many churches have now gone back to the use of the vestments which were customary before the Reformation.[1] These are the alb, amice, girdle, maniple, stole, and chasuble.

The *alb* is a long white linen garment which completely

[1] See Plate 9b.

covers the cassock, and is descended from the over-tunic of Roman times. It has long, narrow sleeves. Strips of elaborately ornamented cloth, called *apparels*, are often sewn on the wrists and the bottom of the alb, which is fastened round the waist by a *girdle* of white cord. The alb may also be worn by servers.

The *amice* is a form of hood which is worn thrown back, and fastened with tapes. Like the alb, it may be apparelled, and may be worn by servers.

The *maniple* is worn only by the priest who is celebrating, and by the deacon and sub-deacon. It is a broad band of embroidered cloth of the colour of the season, and is worn on the left wrist. Its origin is uncertain, but it probably came into use to clean the sacred vessels after the stole had become purely a vestment and was no longer used for this purpose.

The *stole* is a narrow strip of cloth, of the colour of the season. It is fringed, and often richly embroidered. Priests wear it like the scarf round the shoulders; deacons wear it sashwise across the left shoulder. The reason for the difference is that the deacon's stole was originally a napkin which was used for wiping the chalice and paten after the Holy Communion, whereas the priest's stole is a form of the scarf. There is now no difference in the design. When worn with vestments the stole is crossed in front, except by bishops, who wear it like a scarf. It is worn over the alb and beneath the chasuble.

The *chasuble* is the principal vestment, and is worn only by the celebrant. It is descended from the over-tunic of Roman times, and is made in one piece with a hole in the centre through which the head can pass. It is of the colour of the season, and is often decorated with long strips of material, called *orphreys*, in the shape of a cross.

At the most elaborate celebrations of the Holy Communion the celebrant is assisted by a deacon and sub-deacon. The latter may be a layman who has been licensed by the bishop for this duty. In such cases, the deacon wears a *dalmatic* over the alb, amice, stole, and maniple. This is another form of the over-tunic, and was introduced from Dalmatia in the fourth century. It has very wide sleeves which made it convenient for deacons to carry out their duties. The sub-deacon wears yet another form of this garment, called the *tunicle*. It is less richly decorated, is smaller, and has narrower sleeves. To distinguish them from the chasuble both these vestments are usually square in shape.

The *cope* had its origin in the Roman mantle, which was a kind of summer cloak. Semicircular in shape, it is fastened in front by a morse or clasp and at one time had a hood which could be pulled over the head. It is now an elaborate vestment, often with a richly jewelled morse, and the hood has become a flap which hangs at the back. It is used today for services which are especially elaborate in form, or whose importance it is desired to emphasise, and for processions. The cope is sometimes used instead of the chasuble by the celebrant in cathedrals.

It is possible to distinguish a bishop by special forms of the robes. When choir robes are used the bishop wears a garment called a *rochet*, a long white surplice reaching almost to the feet. The sleeves, instead of being open, are gathered together at the wrists and fastened with a band. At one time the sleeves worn by bishops were enormous, and were nicknamed 'balloon sleeves', but these are not often seen today. The rochet is made of lawn—a kind of fine linen—and this fact, coupled with the former size of the sleeves, has led to a

bishop so dressed being said to be 'in lawn sleeves'. Over the rochet, the bishop wears a *chimere*. This is a kind of cassock of black or scarlet which looks rather like a university gown, but is fastened at the front and without sleeves (Fig. 16).

With vestments or cope the bishop also wears a *mitre*, a tall head-dress which is often richly decorated. It has been in use for about a thousand years.[1]

The bishop also wears a *ring*, and carries a *crosier* —sometimes called a crook, or pastoral staff. The crosier is an elaborate form of the shepherd's crook. The bishop is the shepherd, the people of the diocese are his sheep, and the crosier is the sign of his authority to lead them. Sometimes it is carried in front of the bishop by his chaplain. When an archbishop is officiating as the bishop of his diocese a *cross* is carried before him in addition to his crosier; in other parts of his province the cross is usually carried alone.

Fig. 16 A bishop's choir robes—cassock (covered in this picture by the rochet with its lawn sleeves), chimere, scarf, pectoral cross, bands and cap.

The robes used in the Roman Catholic Church are similar to those of the Church of England. In the

[1] See Plate 10.

nonconformist Churches there is a good deal of variety, and it is not unusual to find a service being taken by a man wearing an ordinary suit with a collar and tie. In most nonconformist Churches the minister wears a plain black gown. This may be either a university gown or a similar garment—called a Geneva gown—with short, open sleeves. There was a period in the history of the Church of England when vestments and the surplice were rarely worn and, at that time, Anglican clergy wore the Geneva gown over the cassock for preaching. Many nonconformist ministers wear the hoods of their degrees and, more rarely, you may see them wearing a cassock, scarf, and Geneva bands.

The Geneva gown emphasises the protestant nature of these Churches, and their loyalty to the teaching of John Calvin who lived in Geneva. The bands, or tabs, however, are sometimes worn by Church of England clergy. They are part of the dress of Masters of Arts at Oxford and Cambridge, and are also worn by chaplains to mayors and magistrates, and by barristers. They consist of two short pieces of starched linen worn at the throat.

10. The Bishop of Newcastle, wearing cope and mitre

11.*a* Lincoln Cathedral

6

The Geography of the Church

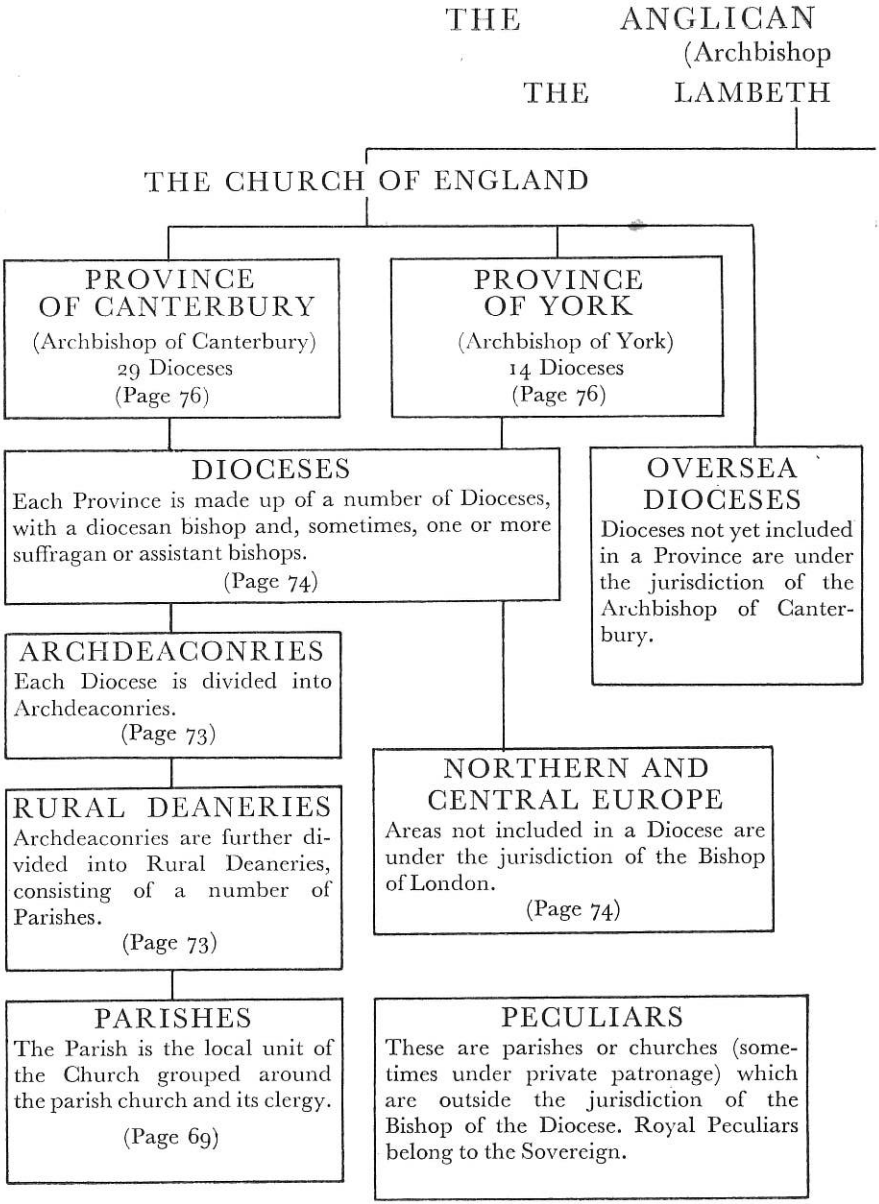
6

WHEREVER you live in England your home is in a *parish*. This is the name given to a part of the country which is served by one parish church and the clergy attached to it. All the people who live within its boundaries are parishioners.

At one time parishes often had the same boundaries as towns and villages. Each place had one church which served the whole of its area. Many towns have now become too large for this, and you will find that big towns include a large number of parishes. Large parishes may also have 'daughter churches' to cater for the needs of people who live at a distance from the parish church itself.

The principal minister of a parish church is usually called either the *rector* or *vicar*. At one time there was a considerable difference between rectors and vicars, but there is little today. In either case, he is known as the incumbent. He is the head of the local family of the Church, and is expected to do everything in his power to care for the needs of his parishioners. In a big parish he may be assisted by one or more curates—usually younger men who are gaining experience of parish life before taking on the full responsibility of a parish themselves. Some of the assistant curates may be deacons, some priests.

In addition, there may be a deaconess, or a woman


THE ANGLICAN
(Archbishop
THE LAMBETH
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY
(Archbishop of Canterbury)
29 Dioceses
(Page 76)
PROVINCE OF YORK
(Archbishop of York)
14 Dioceses
(Page 76)
DIOCESES
Each Province is made up of a number of Dioceses, with a diocesan bishop and, sometimes, one or more suffragan or assistant bishops.
(Page 74)
OVERSEA DIOCESES
Dioceses not yet included in a Province are under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury.
ARCHDEACONRIES
Each Diocese is divided into Archdeaconries.
(Page 73)
NORTHERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE
Areas not included in a Diocese are under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London.
(Page 74)
RURAL DEANERIES
Archdeaconries are further divided into Rural Deaneries, consisting of a number of Parishes.
(Page 73)
PARISHES
The Parish is the local unit of the Church grouped around the parish church and its clergy.
(Page 69)
PECULIARS
These are parishes or churches (sometimes under private patronage) which are outside the jurisdiction of the Bishop of the Diocese. Royal Peculiars belong to the Sovereign.

COMMUNION

of Canterbury)

CONFERENCE

INDEPENDENT CHURCHES AND PROVINCES OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

As well as the Church of Ireland, the Episcopal Church in Scotland, and the Church in Wales, this group includes the Churches which have grown from the missionary activity of the Church of England. Having developed the full organisation of a Church, they have now become independent.

They remain in communion with the Church of England, and with each other, and they take part in the Lambeth Conferences. They still recognise the Archbishop of Canterbury as their spiritual head, but are no longer under his jurisdiction.

(Page 77)

DIOCESES

Each Province consists of a number of Dioceses with a diocesan bishop.

SMALLER DIVISIONS

The Diocese, with its bishop, is the real 'unit' of the Church. Overseas, the division of a Diocese into Archdeaconries, etc., may be modified to suit local needs.

Fig. 17 The organisation of the Anglican Communion.

worker. Deaconesses are women who have had very much the same training as a priest, but the Church of England, following the main stream of catholic practice, has never allowed women to take holy orders. (In the Congregational and Baptist Churches it is now possible for women to be ordained as ministers.) A deaconess is specially set apart for her work, and she may wear a uniform—usually a blue costume or dress with a veil, and a badge which hangs from a cord round her neck. Women workers have received a similar training, but have not been set apart in the same way. In both cases, they work particularly with the women of the parish, and they usually organise much of the Sunday-school work. There may also be one or more lay readers who assist in the conduct of services and undertake certain other duties.

The life of a parish is not confined to providing services on Sundays. In most places there is a strong social life centred on the parish church with fellowships, youth clubs, and such organisations as the Scouts and Guides. Money has to be raised to maintain the church and its work, and this is often done through sales of work, bazaars, coffee mornings, and so forth, as the amount given directly by parishioners is not usually sufficient.

Although the church is at its busiest on Sundays, there is a daily celebration of the Holy Communion in many parishes, and Morning and Evening Prayer are usually said each day. The clergy spend a great deal of their time visiting parishioners in their own homes and, if there is a hospital or prison in the parish, they will visit the inmates, and hold special services for them.

Many parishes have voluntary schools whose buildings belong to the Church, and where religious education may be given in accordance with the teaching of the Church of

England. Even where there is no Church school it is possible for children who belong to the Church of England to be given this instruction by the clergy under certain conditions.

Parishes are grouped together in a *rural deanery*, and one of the senior clergy of the deanery is appointed by the bishop as the rural dean. He must inspect the churches in his deanery from time to time, and report on their state. When a living becomes vacant he is often called upon to help in finding clergy or lay readers to conduct the services until a new incumbent is appointed. He is the chairman of the ruri-decanal conference, which consists of the clergy of the deanery and certain lay folk who have been elected by their parishes. He also presides over the ruri-decanal chapter, a regular meeting of the clergy of his deanery.

A group of rural deaneries forms an *archdeaconry*. An archdeacon must be at least thirty years old, and have been in priest's orders for six years or more. The archdeacon is the bishop's officer, and has the power to visit the parishes in his archdeaconry. He is particularly concerned with the state of church buildings. Soon after Easter each year he admits the new churchwardens to their office on behalf of the bishop.

Archdeaconries and rural deaneries are, however, merely parts of the principal division of the Church, the diocese. Every parish forms part of a *diocese*, or *see*, which is the area ruled by a bishop, and is centred on the cathedral. Some of our dioceses, like York, are very large whilst others are comparatively small. Some are ancient, like Canterbury; others have been formed in modern times. As the population has grown in recent years, some of the large dioceses have been split up because they had become too big for the bishop to superintend

closely enough. For example, the modern diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, comprising the county of Suffolk, was carved out of the ancient diocese of Norwich, in 1914.

The bishop is the ruler of the diocese and the father in God of its people. Sometimes, he has one or more assistant bishops. If these assistants take their title from a part of the diocese, they are known as suffragan bishops and are appointed by the Queen to a suffragan see. The Bishop of Chelmsford, for example, has as his assistants the Suffragan Bishops of Colchester and Barking. In some dioceses these bishops have no title of their own: for example, in the diocese of Sheffield the term used is 'Assistant Bishop of Sheffield'. The suffragan or assistant bishop assists the bishop of the diocese by undertaking some of the duties which he would not have the time to fulfil without help. Thus, he represents the bishop at some confirmations, institutions, and many other functions.

Some suffragan bishops may have special duties assigned to them. Under an order made by Charles I, British Anglicans who lived overseas in an area not included in a diocese were held to be within the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London. At one time this covered many parts of the world, but one area after another has been removed from this jurisdiction as new dioceses have been formed overseas. However, a large part of the continent of Europe is still in the care of the Bishop of London. The diocese of London is a large and important one without this additional work, and one of the four suffragan bishops (the Bishop of Fulham) is charged by the Bishop of London with the responsibility for his work overseas.

The bishop spends a great deal of time travelling round his diocese. You will remember that the services of confirmation and ordination can be taken only by a bishop, and a bishop must be present at the institution of a new incumbent. In certain years the bishop holds a 'visitation' when he pays a formal visit to each rural deanery in order to satisfy himself that everything is being done in accordance with the laws and customs of the Church. He has to attend a large number of services in the cathedral, and he is greatly in demand for all sorts of occasions such as laying the foundation stone of a new hospital, or giving away the prizes at a school.

You may think that all this would occupy him fully, but it is by no means the end. He must approve the appointment of clergy, interview young men who are offering themselves for the ministry, and attend many meetings in his diocese. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishops of London, Winchester, and Durham, and the twenty-one next senior bishops are members of the House of Lords. In practice they cannot find the time to attend regularly unless there is an important discussion in which the view of the Church should be heard. The bishops attend all meetings of the Convocation of their province, and of the Church Assembly which is the parliament of the Church. They are often asked to be present on special occasions outside their own dioceses.

The appendices[1] give a list of the most important engagements of the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich during 1958, and also the diary of his principal appointments during May of that year. They range over every part of this large rural diocese with an area of 1,500 square miles comprising almost five hundred parishes. Most of

[1] Pages 100–3.

the Bishop's national and international engagements were in London, which meant that with the travelling involved whole days had to be spent away from the diocese. Life is not made any easier for this Bishop by the fact that his official house is at Ipswich, whilst his cathedral is at Bury St Edmunds, some thirty miles away. The lists in the appendices take no account of daily services in the Bishop's private chapel, interviews, prayer, study, the preparation of sermons, and a great mass of correspondence. In this particular year the Lambeth Conference took the Bishop away from his diocese more than usual, and for five weeks many of his regular engagements had to be taken by the Suffragan Bishop of Dunwich. Nevertheless, the week-ends of the Conference found the Bishop back for preaching engagements in many parts of his diocese. In this busy year he managed to find just one week for a holiday. There is no five-day week for bishops!

Including the twenty new dioceses which have been created since 1836, there are now forty-three dioceses in England. There are also forty-three suffragan and thirty assistant bishops.

In England, and in some countries overseas, the dioceses are grouped in *provinces*. The fourteen northern English dioceses form the Province of York; the remaining twenty-nine make up the Province of Canterbury. Each province is subject to an Archbishop, who is the bishop of a diocese as well as the senior bishop of his province. Thus, the Archbishop of Canterbury must carry out his duties as Bishop of Canterbury, as well as those of archbishop of the province of the same name, and the archbishop of the Province of York is also the bishop of the Diocese of York.

Always, but particularly during the past three hundred

years, the Church has regarded overseas missions as an important part of its work, and through the missionary societies it has planted the work of the Church in many lands. Where this has been done by Anglican clergy they have remained in close contact with the Church at home and, although new bishop shave been consecrated to serve the dioceses overseas, they have still maintained their links with the mother Church. Most of these new Churches are now independent, and have introduced their own local prayer books (as in South Africa and the United States of America). Some of the archbishops and bishops of these dioceses are English, but many bishops have been consecrated from among the local clergy in recent years.

The Churches of the Anglican Communion have a common background, but they no longer have any formal links with the see of Canterbury from which every other Anglican diocese has sprung. These provinces are rather like the grown-up members of a family who have married and gone to live elsewhere. Although they are living their own lives, they still have a sentimental attachment to their old home. Every ten years there is a family reunion when as many as possible of the 470 Anglican bishops come to England where they are the guests of the Archbishop of Canterbury at his London home, Lambeth Palace. For five weeks they discuss the problems they are facing in different parts of the world, and a report of these meetings is published after the Lambeth Conference ends. This report shows the way in which the leaders of the Church feel that God is calling Christians to act, and helps the Churches of the Anglican Communion to present a united front. At the 1958 Lambeth Conference 310 bishops were present.

On p. 80 is a list of the independent Churches and Provinces of the Anglican Communion. Fig. 17 (pages 70–71) gives you some idea of the relationship of the various parts.

The organisation of the Roman Catholic Church is much the same as that of the Church of England. The parish is the basis of local work, and the parishes are grouped in dioceses, under the jurisdiction of bishops and archbishops. A further body, called the College of Cardinals, consists of about seventy senior clergy of various nationalities who meet together from time to time. The responsibility of choosing a new pope rests upon these 'princes of the Church', who usually elect one of their own number, although they need not restrict their choice in this way. The Bishop of Rome, or Pope, is the head of the Roman Catholic Church in all lands.

As we have already seen, the Congregational and Baptist Communions lay more stress on the independence of the local Church. Strictly speaking, the decisions made by a Church meeting cannot be overruled. Both orders, however, formed national and county 'unions' during the first half of the nineteenth century, to give ministers and Church members the opportunity of meeting together to discuss various matters of common interest. The unions also lay down general conditions for entry to the ministry, and deal with other matters on which it is desirable to have a national standard. Since 1919 the Congregationalists have appointed nine ministers as moderators, each with a province to oversee. They have not the power of a bishop over the Churches in their provinces, but their long experience enables them to give sound advice, and in general the Churches take the advice so given. The Baptists have, similarly, appointed general superintendents.

The Methodist Church has retained much more central control than the other nonconformist bodies. Ministers are ordained at the annual Conference and are sent by Conference to the Churches which they will serve. The power of Conference is considerable, and is exercised mainly through superintendent ministers, each of whom is in charge of a small group of Churches, called a circuit. His functions are closer to those of the rural dean than those of the Congregational moderators. A number of circuits are joined together to form a district which may occasionally be as large as a diocese. The principal minister of a district is called the chairman.

Churches and Provinces of the Anglican Communion

1. The Church of England (43 dioceses).
2. The Church of Ireland (14 dioceses).
3. The Episcopal Church in Scotland (7 dioceses).
4. The Church in Wales (6 dioceses).
5. The Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. (103 dioceses).
6. The Church of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon (16 dioceses).
7. The Church of the Province of South Africa (14 dioceses).
8. The Anglican Church of Canada (28 dioceses).
9. The Church of England in Australia and Tasmania (25 dioceses).
10. The Church of the Province of New Zealand (9 dioceses).
11. The Church of the Province of the West Indies (8 dioceses).
12. The Holy Catholic Church in China (15 dioceses).
13. Japan Holy Catholic Church (10 dioceses).
14. The Church of the Province of West Africa (9 dioceses).
15. The Church of the Province of Central Africa (4 dioceses).
16. The Church of the Province of East Africa (8 dioceses).
17. The Church of Uganda and Ruanda-Urundi (8 dioceses).
18. The Anglican Communion in Jerusalem and the Middle East (5 dioceses).

There are also nine dioceses which have not yet been included in an independent province, bringing the total number of dioceses in the Anglican Communion to 340.

7

The Cathedral

ONE church in each diocese is set aside as the cathedral church. The Latin word *cathedra* means 'chair', and the cathedral is so called because the bishop's throne is placed there. Only the diocesan bishop has a throne, for he alone is the ruler of the diocese. Assistant and suffragan bishops have only the powers given to them by their diocesan bishop, and therefore have neither throne nor cathedral. Two great English cathedrals are shown in Plate 11.

The cathedral is the mother church of the diocese and, since many services for the whole diocese take place there, it is usually very large. Many of the older cathedrals were especially built for this purpose, and are spacious and magnificent. Sometimes a new cathedral has been built for the dioceses which have been formed during the past century or so—this has been done at Truro, Liverpool, and Guildford.[1] But cathedrals cost a great deal of money, and it has not always been possible in modern times to build a new church in which to place the bishop's throne. In most of the new dioceses, therefore, a large parish church has been turned into the cathedral. This has been done in Southwark, Birmingham, and a number

[1] Another modern English cathedral is Coventry, where a new building has been erected in place of the cathedral destroyed in an air-raid.

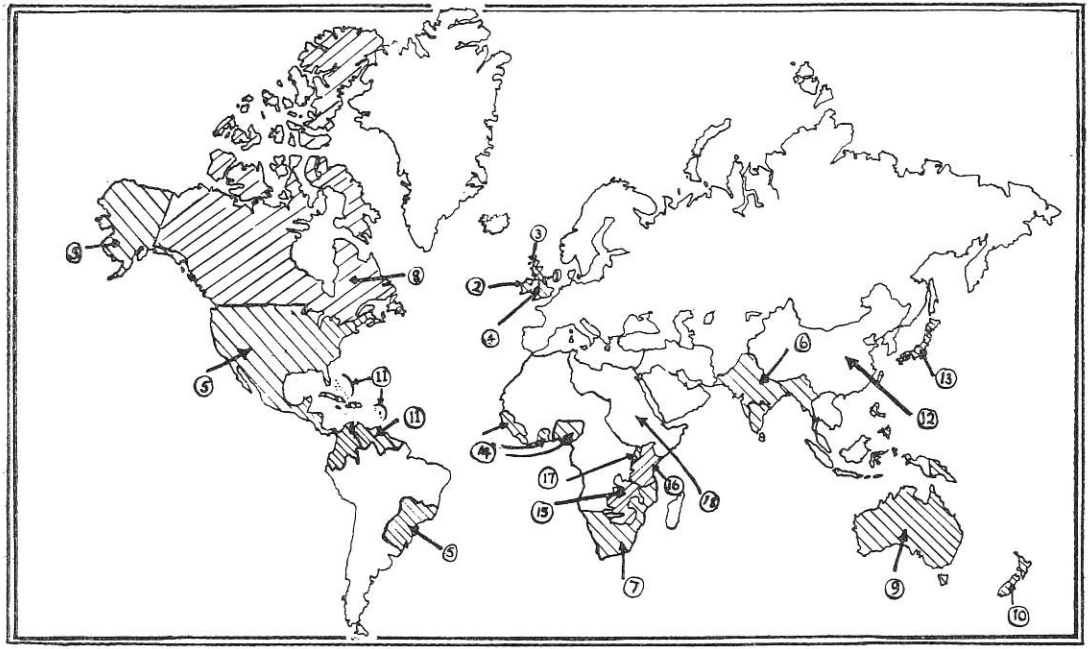


Fig. 18 Churches and Provinces of the Anglican Communion.

of other places. Where this has happened the cathedral is not only the cathedral of the diocese it is also the parish church of the place where it stands. There are extensive plans for enlarging many of these 'parish-church' cathedrals so that they can more fully serve their new purpose. A start has already been made, for example, at Sheffield with the beautiful Chapel of the Holy Spirit, a processional corridor with vestries, and a chapter house. Plans for enlargement also exist at Bury St Edmunds, Chelmsford, and a number of other cathedrals.

Most of the great diocesan festivals are held in the cathedral church. At some time during the year representatives of almost every organisation connected with the Church in the diocese go to the cathedral for an annual service, which is often an occasion of great splendour as when banners of the various branches of the Mothers' Union are carried into the church. Ordinations are usually, but not always, held in the cathedral, and it is there that the bishop is enthroned shortly after his appointment.

The cathedral, however, is not only used for special occasions. There is also a daily round of services, for the chief function of a cathedral is to offer regular prayer to God for the world and, in particular, for the diocese which it serves. Great care is taken to ensure that all these services are carried out with dignity. In many cathedrals there is a very high musical standard, and the singing is led by a choir of boys who attend the cathedral choir school. The hours of lessons at the choir schools are planned to allow the boys to sing at the cathedral services, and music occupies a large part of the time-table. Many famous singers started their careers as pupils of cathedral choir schools.

Although the bishop is the chief minister of the diocese he is not the head of the cathedral, and he may preach there, as a matter of right, only on a limited number of occasions during the year. The principal clergyman of the cathedral is the *dean*,[1] who is appointed by the Queen, and who is assisted by a number of priests, known as *canons*. The dean and canons together are called the *chapter*, and form the ruling body of the cathedral. They are responsible for the maintenance of the services and for the upkeep of the building. In most cathedrals some of the canons are residentiary, and live in houses nearby so that they can be responsible for the various services. As a rule one of the canons is on duty each month, during which period he takes all the cathedral services and is known as the *Canon in Residence*. Others, known as honorary canons, are clergy who have other work in the diocese but who have been given a stall in the cathedral as a mark of honour. One of the canons is usually called the *precentor*, and is responsible for the music, another may be the *treasurer*, and another the *librarian*.

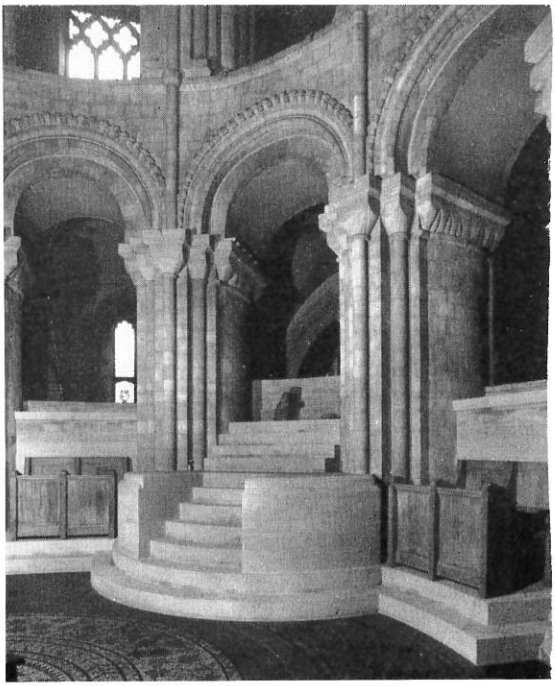
The cathedral needs to be more elaborate than an ordinary parish church, because of the various purposes for which it is used. The screen between the chancel—or *choir* as it is usually called in a cathedral—and the nave is often very heavy in design so that it is not always possible for the congregation in the nave to see what is happening in the choir. To overcome this difficulty many cathedrals have a separate altar, pulpit, and choir stalls in the nave so that when a large congregation is present a nave service in which everyone can take part may be held.

In order to accommodate the large processions which

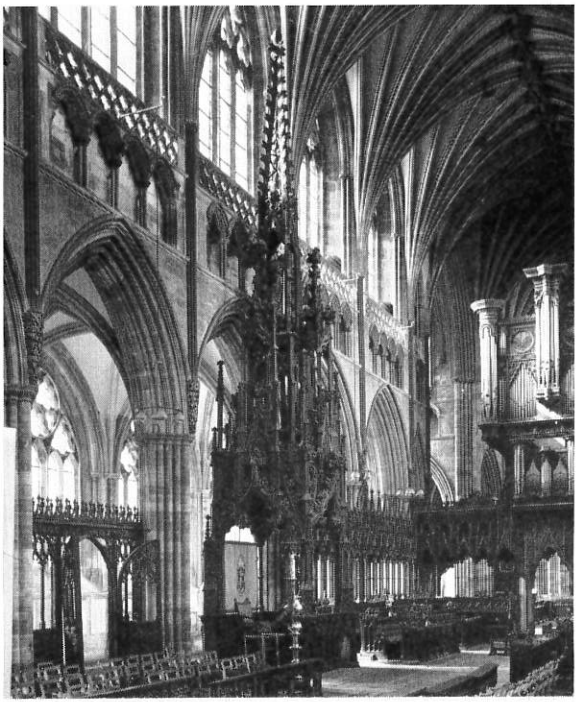
[1] In a 'parish-church' cathedral he is called the *provost*.

11.*b* St Paul's Cathedral, London

12.*a* The Bishop's Throne at Norwich Cathedral



b The Bishop's Throne at Exeter Cathedral



often take place there is frequently a processional corridor called an *ambulatory*—from the Latin word, *ambulo*, meaning 'I walk about'—round the outside of the choir. Many cathedrals have a large number of side-chapels which are used for week-day services when only a few people are present. These are often set aside for special purposes. In St Paul's, for example, the Chapel of St Michael and St George is used by the order of knighthood named after those saints. At Truro there is a boys' chapel where the flags of the Scouts and other boys' organisations may be found.

The *bishop's throne* is set in the choir of the cathedral, usually on the south side. As a rule this is a beautiful chair standing under an elaborate canopy. At Exeter the throne rises to a height of fifty-nine feet from the floor, and is one of the finest examples of wood-carving in the country. It was made about the year 1300, is held together without nails or screws, and cost £12. In striking contrast is the severely simple throne in Norwich Cathedral, the only one if its age still remaining north of the Alps. This throne has now been replaced in its ancient position above, and to the east of, the high altar so that the bishop looks down his cathedral as he presides over his flock.[1]

The *canons' stalls* are ranged down the sides of the choir behind the seats for the boys. Each canon and high officer of the cathedral has his own stall and above it is written the title of his office, sometimes a name connected with the history of the cathedral or diocese, sometimes the name of a local saint.

During the course of a year many people visit our great cathedrals. Some come to pray, some to look at the fine

[1] See Plate 12.

architecture of the building. Sometimes a few are gathered round one of the side altars for an early celebration of the Holy Communion, at other times the great building is crowded for a diocesan festival. Sometimes the trumpets peal as Her Majesty's judge enters the cathedral for the service which takes place before the opening of the assizes in the county town. If the cathedral is also a parish church there is also the regular round of parochial services and activities. But, whatever the occasion, the cathedral remains the mother church of the diocese, the home of the family of God.

The importance of a cathedral is such that other buildings are necessary in addition to the church itself. When the chapter meet to discuss business matters relating to the cathedral they assemble in the *chapter house*, a room quite close to the cathedral and often joined to it by a cloister or corridor. Some of the older cathedrals were once monasteries, and you may still see the rooms where the monks lived and the *cloister* where they took their recreation.

The cathedral often stands in an enclosed area called the *close*, which contains the canons' houses and the *bishop's palace*. Few bishops live nowadays in the great houses which were once considered suitable to their dignity and rank. The palaces are too expensive to maintain, and are often cold and draughty. Many bishops have now left these great buildings for more modern and comfortable homes and the palace has usually been taken over for offices or other purposes connected with the diocese. Some of the bishops' palaces are still used for their original purpose, and the Archbishop of Canterbury uses Lambeth Palace when he is in London.

A few important churches which are not cathedrals have

deans. These churches are *royal peculiars.* Although they stand within the area of a diocese the bishop has no control over them, and their official visitor is the Queen. Of these the best known are the Collegiate Church of St Peter in Westminster, better known as Westminster Abbey, and St George's Chapel within the walls of Windsor Castle.

Roman Catholics also have their cathedrals. All of them in England have been built since 1850, and some are very beautiful. The principal Roman Catholic cathedral in this country is the great church in Westminster dominated by a tall, red-brick tower.

The nonconformist Churches have no cathedrals since they have no bishops, but some of their churches have become important because of their size or position. One such church is the Methodist Central Hall just across the street from Westminster Abbey. When the Methodist Conference takes place in London it is held here, and it has seen many other important gatherings, because it will seat three thousand people and is one of the most convenient halls in London for conferences. During the war the National Assembly of the Church of England met here after its own debating chamber had been destroyed by bombs. At the end of the war, it saw one of the most historic meetings of modern times—the first session of the Assembly of the United Nations Organisation. A famous Congregational church is the City Temple, the only nonconformist church within the square mile of the City of London.

8

The Book of Common Prayer

FIG. 19 (pages 90 and 91) is a picture of the title-page of the Prayer Book which is used in the Church of England. Since 1662 this has been the only book officially allowed for the conduct of worship in the Church. Before the time of Henry VIII all services were in Latin, and were contained in a number of books, the *Missal* for the Mass, the *Breviary* containing a calendar, psalms, hymns, collects and readings, the *Manual* comprising the occasional offices, the *Pontifical* for the services requiring a bishop. Under the guidance of Thomas Cranmer, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in Henry VIII's reign, an English Prayer Book was prepared with some alterations in the services. Many of the prayers were directly translated from the Latin by the Archbishop himself, and much of the wording of the Prayer Book as we have it today is from Cranmer's own pen.

Cranmer's aim was not only to give us a Prayer Book in our own language, but also to simplify the services and bring them together in one book. In his introduction to the first English Prayer Book, the Archbishop complained that the service of the Church had become so complicated that a special book of rules called the *Pie* had been written to help people find their way about. As a result it was often more trouble to find out what ought to be read than

to read it. The Book of Common Prayer really consists of five parts, and the name of each appears on the title-page. Other books in this series will deal with some of the sections in detail—here we are concerned with the general arrangement and the contents of the various parts.

1. The Book of Common Prayer.—This includes the two choir offices of Morning and Evening Prayer (sometimes called Matins and Evensong), the Creed of St Athanasius, the Litany, and Prayers and Thanksgiving for use on special occasions. The word 'common' is used here to make it clear that it is not intended as a book of prayers for private use, either by priest or layfolk, but by the people 'in common', that is, together.

Morning and *Evening Prayer* have been made up from the seven daily offices of the monks, reduced to two services.

The Litany is a form of prayer in which a number of short petitions are spoken by the priest and the congregation make them their own by adding a response. The Litany of the English Prayer Book is worth reading carefully; you will then see how complete it is, for all the people and things for which we ought to pray are included in it.

Of the *Prayers and Thanksgivings* two deserve special mention. One is the prayer 'for all sorts and conditions of men', which is really a summary of the Litany. In it we ask God to bless all men according to their needs, both those whom we know and those whom we do not, and especially those who are suffering from bodily or mental illness or who are worried about their affairs. It is difficult to find another prayer which asks so much in a mere 157 words. Nobody who needs God's help is

Morning and Evening Prayer:- worship intended to be used by the Church "in common," that is together, or publicly.

Baptism and Holy Communion the two "Gospel Sacraments."

The Occasional Offices:- Confirmation, Marriage, Visitation of the Sick, Burial of the Dead, Thanksgiving after childbirth, Communion, Prayers for Use at Sea - services used as occasion requires.

The Book of Psalms:- an English translation of the hymns which our Lord knew and used.

The Ordinal:- the services used in the making of deacons, the ordination of priests, and the consecration of bishops.

Fig. 19 The title page of the Book of Common Prayer, showing how it is really made up of several different books.

THE BOOK

OF

COMMON PRAYER

AND

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS

AND OTHER RITES AND CEREMONIES OF THE CHURCH
ACCORDING TO THE USE OF

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

TOGETHER WITH THE PSALTER OR PSALMS OF DAVID, POINTED AS THEY
ARE TO BE SUNG OR SAID IN CHURCHES; AND THE FORM AND
MANNER OF MAKING, ORDAINING, AND CONSECRATING
OF BISHOPS, PRIESTS, AND DEACONS

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missed out, yet not a word is wasted. The other is the General Thanksgiving, in which we thank God for 'all his goodness . . . but above all . . . for the redemption of the world by our Lord, Jesus Christ. . . .' Since the time that it was written this beautiful prayer has been used whenever English people have met together on occasions of special rejoicing. It was used when the Spanish Armada was defeated in the reign of Elizabeth I; a century later Londoners who had survived the plague thanked God for its passing in this prayer; its words mingled with the bells of rejoicing after the victories of Trafalgar and Waterloo; more recently, it was used to thank God for our deliverance after each of the great world wars. At all times, when we have particular cause to be thankful, these are the words which we use.

2. The Administration of the Sacraments.—The word *sacrament* is defined in the Prayer Book as 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace'. In a sacrament something is done as a sign that the gift of the Holy Spirit, which cannot be seen, is being given by God. It is important to remember that, though the sacrament is administered by a priest or bishop who performs the outward actions, the really important thing is the inward and invisible grace which is given by God.

There are seven services which are sometimes called sacraments, but the Prayer Book regards two—Baptism and Holy Communion—as being 'generally necessary for salvation'. These the Church was actually commanded to observe by our Lord himself, and they are sometimes called the Gospel sacraments. Fig. 20 gives a list of these seven services and the outward sign which is used in each.

Sacrament	By whom administered	Outward sign	Meaning
The Gospel Sacraments			
Holy Communion	Bishop or Priest	Bread and Wine	Bread, the body } of our Wine, the blood } Lord
Baptism	Bishop, Priest or Deacon (or, in emergency, a layman)	Water	Washing away of sin and entering into New Life.
The other Sacraments			
Confirmation	Bishop	Laying on of hands	Blessing, through the gift of the Holy Spirit.
Marriage	Bishop or Priest	Ring	The circle is the sign of eternity as it has neither beginning nor end.
Penance	Bishop or Priest	Act of Penance	Sorrow for wrongdoing.
Unction	Bishop or Priest	Anointing with oil	Gift of the Holy Spirit.
Orders (Ordination)	Bishop	Laying on of hands	Blessing, through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Fig. 20. The Sacraments of the Church.

You will find two services of *Baptism* in the Prayer Book. One is for infants who do not themselves understand what is happening, so the promises are made for them by their godparents. This was the only form of the service in the earlier Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552. By 1662, when the present book was prepared, there had been a good deal of colonisation in America, and it was often necessary to baptise whole families who had been converted to Christianity. To meet this need an additional service for the baptism of adults was inserted to

provide for candidates who were old enough to make the promises for themselves. The baptism of adults is still quite common; indeed, the number of adult candidates has increased in recent years.

The *Holy Communion* is also to be found in this part of the book. Different collects, epistles, and gospels are provided for the various seasons and holy days throughout the year. These are called the *proper* (from the Latin word *proprius* which means 'belonging to') because they belong to a particular season. The main part of the service, which does not vary, is called the *ordinary*.

3. Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church.—This part of the Prayer Book contains what are sometimes called the occasional offices—those which are used as occasion demands rather than regularly. Included in it are three of the five services sometimes called sacraments which cannot be traced back to a direct command by our Lord in the Gospels, and certain other services which are in occasional use. The order of *Confirmation* follows the *Catechism*, and reminds us that the latter was intended as a preparation for this service. At one time parts of the Catechism, if not the whole, had to be known by heart before a candidate could be confirmed. The other lesser sacraments occurring in this section are the *Solemnisation of Matrimony*, and the *Visitation of the Sick*. Anointing the sick with oil, although omitted from the Prayer Book, is a regular practice in some parishes, and many bishops now follow the ancient practice of consecrating on Maundy Thursday the oils which may be used during the following year in those parishes which ask for them.

Also included among the other rites and ceremonies, are the *Burial of the Dead*, the *Thanksgiving of Women after*

Childbirth, the *Commination*, and *Forms of Prayer for Use at Sea*. The Commination service is used on Ash Wednesday, although the first part of it is rarely heard nowadays. The season of Lent has always been regarded as a time of penitence and preparation for the great festival of Easter, and in olden times it was customary for Christians to go to the priest to confess their sins, and to be shriven—which means to receive God's pardon—on the day before Lent began. We still remember this in the name Shrove Tuesday, the day of shriving. On the following day the Commination service reminded men of God's hatred of evil, prepared them for the season of Lent.

The *Accession Service* is the only survivor of a group of four state services, which were printed in the Prayer Book until 1859. One of those which have disappeared was a service designed to be used on the anniversary of the execution of King Charles I on January 30th, 1649. Many people believed that the king had died for faithfulness to his religion, and mourned him for a very long time. His death is still commemorated in some parts of the country. Falmouth Parish Church is dedicated to 'King Charles the Martyr', and the city mace of Exeter is still shrouded in black crepe in memory of the king—it is not surprising to learn that the city's motto is *Semper Fidelis*, which means 'Ever Faithful'. The second state service which has been omitted is that for Oak Apple Day on May 29th, to commemorate the return of Charles II from his exile, in 1660. Finally, there was a service which was used on November 5th in thanksgiving for the safe deliverance of the kingdom from the Gunpowder Plot in 1605.

As time went by these services had been used less and less, and it was felt to be unwise to include permanently

the commemoration of certain historical events long after their importance had ceased to be generally recognised. It is now thought more suitable to prepare special forms of service for such occasions. This is done, for example, on Remembrance Day, the Sunday before November 11th each year, which is observed in memory of the men who died in the world wars of 1914–18 and 1939–45. Battle of Britain Sunday is similarly observed.

4. The Psalter, or Psalms of David.—The book of Psalms was the hymn-book of the Jewish Temple, and its words were well known to the early Christians. In the early years of the Church the psalms were the only hymns in use, and they have played a part in Christian worship ever since. They are arranged in such a way that the whole psalter can be said through once a month in the course of the daily services, and the Psalms are found in the prayer-book under the heading of days of the month. Many are omitted from the special table of Psalms now used for Sundays. The Prayer Book translation of the psalms is older than that which appears in the Bible, and is the work of Miles Coverdale, who was Bishop of Exeter from 1551 to 1555.

5. The Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating, of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.—This is the Ordinal, or book of ordination services. We have already looked at it briefly in Chapter 4 when we were talking about the ministry of the Church.

★ ★ ★ ★

Those are the contents of the Prayer Book, itself, but there are other items in the book as it is printed which deserve a

brief mention. At the beginning is a copy of an Act of Parliament, *the Act of Uniformity*, which was passed in the reign of Elizabeth I, and which ordered the book to be used in the services of the Church of England throughout the land. This is followed by three essays written by Cranmer to explain the changes which were being made in the services. If you think that these are just so much ancient history written in quaint and rather difficult English, remember that they help us to understand just why our services take the form which they do today, and that men thought the things Cranmer wrote to be important enough for them to suffer death rather than deny them. The remainder of the book is taken up with rules for the use of the Psalter and lessons, tables for finding the date of Easter, and a calendar of saints' days and lessons. In some ways this part of the book replaces the *Pie*, which contained the rules for the old Latin services.

At the end of the book are the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*, which set out the reasons for the beliefs of the Church of England. Drawn up in 1562, they were first printed in the Prayer Book by the command of Charles I. If you go to Church on the first Sunday after a new rector or vicar has been instituted, you will hear him read the Articles instead of preaching a sermon. Lastly there is the Table of Kindred and Affinity, a list of the close relatives whom a person is forbidden to marry.

An important thing which has to be remembered in making a Prayer Book is that it must provide services which are suitable to the needs of all the people who will use it. For some time there has been a feeling that the Prayer Book needs to be brought up to date without altering its essential teaching. An attempt to do this was made in the 1920s but, although the Church accepted the

revised book, this was not sufficient. Because the Church of England is established by law it is necessary to have the consent of Parliament before one word of its official worship can be changed. In 1928 Parliament rejected the new book. Most churches, however, use parts of it frequently although, strictly speaking, the Act of Uniformity of Elizabeth I is still in force and the 1662 book is the only one which may legally be used.

In other parts of the Anglican Communion a good deal of progress has been made towards revision. The prayers for the Queen and the Royal Family are unsuitable for a book which is used in the United States of America or in other countries which do not belong to the British Commonwealth. Some of the daughter churches have produced new books. Even in England many people now feel that the 1928 book is already out of date, and discussions are being held with a view to further revision. In countries where English is not the ordinary language forms of the Prayer Book have been produced in the native tongue, as in Japan.

Roman Catholics still use the books which were in use in England before the time of Henry VIII. The Methodists have always used a form of the Holy Communion which is very similar to that of the Church of England and their service book is, in many places, similar to the Book of Common Prayer. On the whole, Congregationalists and Baptists have not favoured set forms of prayer, and much has been left to the discretion of the minister taking a particular service, but in recent years several service books have been produced in these orders.

During the past fifty years there has been an increasing feeling that the Prayer Book is too rigid in places to meet the needs of all occasions and all people. At the same

time, leaving everything to the whim of the minister may make services disjointed, and difficult to follow. The result has been a movement towards more freedom (with control) in the Church of England, and towards more order (with freedom) in the nonconformist Churches. One thing is certain—the Book of Common Prayer is one of the priceless possessions of our national heritage and, though some changes may be desirable, they should be made only with the greatest care, and after much thought, if we are not to destroy something which has become so dear to the hearts of four centuries of Englishmen.

Appendix

1 Some Engagements from the Diary of the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich during May, 1958

Day	*Date*	*Engagements*
Th	1	**SS Philip and James** Holy Communion, *Bishop's Chapel*, 8 a.m. Church Commissioners, *London*, 11 a.m. Dedication of Church Extension, *St Thomas, Ipswich*, 7.30 p.m.
F	2	Dedication of Messrs Ransomes, Sims, and Jeffries' Memorial Gates, *Ipswich*, 7 p.m.
S	3	Holy Communion, *Leiston Abbey* (Festival) 11 a.m. Annual Meeting, *Leiston Abbey*, 3 p.m. Readers' Board, *Ipswich*, 4.30 p.m.
S	4	Holy Communion, *Bishop's Chapel*, 8 a.m. Interview ordination candidate, 10 a.m. Preach, St Edmundsbury Junior School Coming-of-Age service, *Cathedral*, 3 p.m. Preach, Industrial service, *Brantham*, 6.30 p.m.
M	5	Interview, 9.30 a.m. Parochial Church Council, *Pettaugh*, 7 p.m.
Tu	6	Bishops' Meetings, *Lambeth Palace*
W	7	Bishops' Meetings, *Lambeth Palace*
Th	8	Episcopal Visitation, Archdeaconry of Suffolk, *Framlingham*, 2 p.m.
F	9	Interview churchwarden, 11 a.m. Chairman, Clergy Wives' meeting, *Ipswich*, 8 p.m.
S	10	Interview, 9.30 a.m.

Preach, Girls' Friendly Society, *Cathedral*, 3 p.m.
Interview, 8 p.m.

S	11	**Rogation Sunday** Holy Communion, *Bishop's Chapel*, 8 a.m. Preach, *St Peter Mancroft, Norwich*, 11 a.m. Preach, *Culford School, Bury St Edmunds*, 6 p.m.
M	12	Interview new incumbent, 10 a.m. Clerical Society, *Newmarket*, 11 a.m.
Tu	13	Episcopal Visitation, Archdeaconry of Ipswich, *Ipswich*, 11 a.m. Interviews, 2.30 and 8 p.m.
W	14	Church Commissioners, *London*, 11 a.m. Episcopal Visitation, Archdeaconry of Sudbury, *Cathedral*, 3 p.m.
Th	15	**Ascension Day** Holy Communion, *Haughley*, 9.30 a.m. Confirmation, *Cowlinge*, 7.30 p.m.
F	16	Leiston Abbey Committee, *Leiston*, 2.30 p.m. Confirmation, *Elvedon*, 7.30 p.m.
S	17	Interviews, 10.15 a.m. and 12.45 p.m. Readers' meeting, *Ipswich*, 2.30 p.m. Tea, *St Matthew, Ipswich*, 4.30 p.m. License Readers and preach, *Ipswich*, 6 p.m.

S	18	Holy Communion, *Bishop's Chapel*, 8 a.m. Preach, *Highgate School, London*, 6.30 p.m.
M	19	Education Committee, *Ipswich*, 10 a.m. Clergy and Ministers' Conference, *U.S.A.A.F. Station, Bentwaters*—morning and afternoon
Tu	20	Annual Council Meeting and luncheon, *Beccles*, 12 noon Vicar of Bungay, 6.30 p.m. Confirmation, *Bungay*, 7.30 p.m.

W	21	Interview, 10.30 a.m. Luncheon and Governors' Meeting, *King Edward VI Grammar School, Bury St Edmunds* Interview, 8 p.m.
Th	22	Holy Communion, *Earl Soham*, 8.30 a.m. Address Loes Deanery Chapter, *Earl Soham*, 10.30 a.m. Dedication, new Secondary Modern School, *East Bergholt*, 2.30 p.m. Confirmation, *Sudbury*, 7.30 p.m.
F	23	Preach, Peoples' Offering service, *Eye*, 7.30 p.m.
S	24	Confirmation, *St George, Bury St Edmunds*, 3 p.m.
S	25	**Whit Sunday** Holy Communion, *Bishop's Chapel*, 8 a.m. Preach, Children's Gift Service, *Newmarket*, 3 p.m. Preach, *All Saints, Newmarket*, 6.30 p.m.
M	26	Festival of St Edmund's Guild, *Cathedral*—all day
Tu	27	Interview, 10 a.m. Civic luncheon to mark visit of H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent, *Ipswich*, 12.15 p.m.
W	28	Attend farewell gathering to Prebendary E. A. Dunn, St James, Muswell Hill, *London*, 7 p.m.
Th	29	Funeral of Provost of St Edmundsbury, *Cathedral*, 10.15 a.m. Address, Ladies Home Mission, *London*, 3 p.m. Ordination retreat commences, *Ipswich*, 5 p.m.
F	30	Dedication of memorial to Lord Horder, *Golders Green Crematorium, London*, 3 p.m. Ordination retreat—remainder of day
S	31	Ordination retreat—all day

2. *Some further Engagements of the Bishop during 1958*

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

Lambeth Conference	33 days
Host to Bishops visiting the diocese	5 days
Church Assembly	13 days
Convocation of Province of Canterbury	8 days
Bishops' meetings at Lambeth Palace	4 days
Board and Committees of Church Commissioners	21 days
Central Council for Womens Work	3 days
Missionary functions	3 days

DIOCESAN, ETC.	*In the Diocese*	*Beyond the Diocese*
Confirmations	40	1
Institutions and Inductions	14	
Installation of Provost	1	
Ordinations	3	
Ordination retreats	9 days	
Preaching appointments (general)	49	3
Festivals and special services	7	1
School services	9	1
Youth organisations	5	
Dedications	8	1
Other denominations	3	
Schoolboys' conference		4 days
Diocesan committees	49	
Visitations	3	

LAY OCCASIONS

Civic functions	10
School Speech Days	3
Business and industrial visits	5
Social and charitable organisations	8

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